

Colville, W. J.  
Mediumship

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# MEDIUMSHIP

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ITS NATURE, LAWS, DANGERS  
AND ADVANTAGES



W. J. COLVILLE



FOREWORD BY  
CORA L. V. RICHMOND

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# FOREWORD

By CORA L. V. RICHMOND.

“The efflorescence of his being blooms  
On earth, blooms splendidly; like May he  
came  
Scattering rich flowers o’er glens and fields  
And jagged peaks and solitudes; he sped  
Like a clear streamlet o’er its rocky bed,  
That by no torture can be hushed to sleep  
But pours its music, hastening to the deep.”

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Priority of acquaintance with and friendship for the one whose earthly name heads this article prompted the writer to send this brief sketch to the magazine whose readers have read so many of his valuable articles, and doubtless many of whom have listened to his inspired utterances. I say his earthly name. Only those endowed with rare spiritual insight can know the larger name by which he is known to spiritual beings. All can know, who so desire and are sufficiently unfolded in spirit, the path of light that he left upon the earth to guide them unto higher and nobler views of life, and unto knowledge of the Truths of the Spirit, his legacy of writings and teachings.

It was during my stay of three years (1872-1875) in Great Britain, that I was invited to deliver mid-week lectures in

Brighton, England (as I was holding Sunday services in London). My host urged me to remain another day after my meetings had taken place, as some thing very extraordinary had occurred. A young lad had attended my lecture the night previous and heard the inspiration of the guides. Two or three of his boy friends had accompanied him, and after the lecture they chaffed him for being so absorbed in what he had heard. Finally one of them said in a bantering manner: "If this trance speaking lady is true, why don't you go into a trance and speak and make poems?" Young Colville did go into a trance and spoke and "made poems" much to the surprise and utmost terror of his companions. My host had heard of this and urged me to stay and hear and see this lad (then in his 15th year). I saw and heard him and said then: "The world will hear from him at no distant day; he will speak in many lands."

In 1877 he came to America. I was glad to introduce him to friends in Boston, New York and Washington, and to the summer camp meetings just being started. No introductions were needed after the first hearing, and he had more calls than even he could respond to. A few times he spoke to my congregation in Chicago, for a month or two during my absence. Although speakers rarely meet in their work, we were some times engaged for the same week or so at the camp and summer assemblies. There was



always the great appreciation and sympathy between us and our work together was pleasing and harmonious.

He was apparently frail of body and sensitively strung like a musical instrument, but the tense nervous and mental activity (the prodigious brain power) kept him ever busy, busy, busy. The learning, erudition and depth of thought of this young lad, "still in his 'teens," was another of those "knotty problems" that Spiritualism has presented to a critical world to solve. Science has failed to find any other solution than that claimed by the Spirit-world. (Sir Oliver Lodge being the most recent of more than two scores of eminent scientists to proclaim his knowledge of a future life and spirit communion.)

Mr. Colville's work, his urgent nature requiring constant work, led him into many fields of thought, among those who were inquiring into many subjects (all included in Spiritualism). He saw the good that was in them and fearlessly rejected anything not perceived to be true.

Back and forth between England and America, and to far Australia went our indefatigable worker. I often called him a "Spiritual Shuttle," and what golden threads he wove into the dull warp of human life, replete with home, animated with the best that is in the world and is to come. This broadmindedness and versatility led many to say: "He has left Spiritualism for Theosophy; for Christian Science; for New

Thought." Not so. He saw that they had come into existence on the open door that Spiritualism had revealed (many times borrowing its truths) and he could correct many of their errors by seeing and appreciating their truths.

He never "settled down" to a regular congregation, although working many times for a long period in one city. He preferred being a "free lance," following "the call" wherever it seemed best, whenever he was needed.

His quaint sense of humor proved a real "safety valve"—a reaction and recreation from the tenseness of so much work on such deep and profound subjects. This quaint humor we enjoyed when he was at our home and we always joined in his talk, using the fanciful names he bestowed on others and on himself. Music was his chief source of rest and recreation, and he frequently went to Catholic churches to hear the music, leading a few fearful ones to whisper "Jesuitical influence"? Never fear, his nature was too fine—his life too exalted, and his inspirers too wise and far seeing!

He was true to his calling and in his life, abstemious almost to asceticism.

When not under the influence of his inspirers he was child like and as I have said had a quaint sense of humor that was a real protection to him—for one cannot talk on deep subjects continually, even when followed home from a lecture by some listener.

who wanted some passage explained or further elaborated.

“No other like Colville;” certainly not. Each has his or her place that no one else can fill—and his chosen work was his life. It is in the world and its radiance will be a pathway of light for those to follow who have seen and heard and understood, or who may hereafter understand his teachings.

The following poem and symbolic name was given him by my poetic inspirer (Ouina), in the year 1877. How well it shows the chosen work of his life, and his adaptation to that work the reader can judge.

We follow him in spirit to the new-found state and rejoice in the larger life and light, light, light.

### TRUTH'S EVANGEL

Poem and symbolic name given to

W. J. COLVILLE,

by the poetic inspirer of Mrs. Cora L. V.  
Richmond (Ouina) in the year 1877.

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Sensitive as the harp that's swung

By Aeolus in the summer breeze,

When all the forests are o'er hung

With verdure of entwining trees.

Fond of the flowers of the field

And garden—all things fair and bright—

Each can to thee rare pleasure yield,

All nature gladdens thy young sight.

I see thee not “amid the throng”

Of those who seek for worldly power;  
Thy spirit will attune its song  
To other themes: the Soul's blest dower.  
Thou has been chosen in thy youth  
To help to bear the message forth  
Of Life Immortal,—the living Truth  
From realms above to those on Earth.  
Music can soothe thee; and its power  
Will aid and strengthen on thy way;  
Will charm in any weary hour  
Thy spirit by its potent sway.  
From out their Realm of Light and Love  
The spirit messages appear  
And ever on thy being move  
To teach of truth's new dawning year.  
In many lands; far o'er the sea,  
And in thy homeland this blest word  
Of Life Immortal, thou shalt be  
The bearer of Truth's stainless sword.  
—From "Reason."

# MEDIUMSHIP



## LESSON I.

### ITS NATURE, LAWS, ADVANTAGES AND DANGERS

The question of mediumship is a very wide one and one, moreover, which permits of an immense variety of definitions and interpretations. In its simplest and most obvious form, the word only signifies susceptibility to various influences, both seen and unseen, of which non-mediumistic, or non-sensitive persons, remain permanently unconscious on account of their temperamental lack of necessary sensitiveness. As a transparent substance like glass is a medium thru which light and heat pass readily, while an opaque substance like brick or wood does not permit of their so ready passage; we may decide that in a typically mediumistic organism there is a refinement approximating transparency which renders the medium—otherwise termed a sensitive or psychic—susceptible. The utter spontaneity with which many phases of mediumship manifest themselves has led many investigators of psychic phenomena to reasonably affirm that mediumship must be much more of a natural gift or endowment than a result of intentional cultivation of any special faculties. A wise middle ground can surely be taken between extreme positions, and, while admitting, indeed definitely teaching, that mediumship is essentially due to special untutored inborn sensitiveness, it is possible to assist, to a large extent, by judicious culture in the regulation of spontaneous susceptibility to outside influences.

Since the dawn of the era of what is definitely termed Modern Psychology, much controversy has arisen over the sources whence the intelligence emanates, usually attributed to mediumship in general. The theory of two minds, objective and subjective, started by Thomson Jay Hudson when he published his widely circulated treatise, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," led many enquirers into psychic problems during the closing years of the Nineteenth century to seriously dispute the old Spiritualistic ground which had successfully resisted innumerable attacks made upon it from various sources since 1848. For a time the two minds' theory threatened to alienate many thinkers from the accepted Spiritualistic position, but further anthropological researches have served to reconcile seemingly opposing views by demonstrating that the one theory by no means overthrows the other.

To the simple Spiritualist, who attributes all psychic manifestations directly and unquestionably to the agency of so-called "departed spirits the idea that we can communicate with each other telepathically, and that many communications received in a psychical manner come from our incarnate, not from our excarnate friends, led to not unnatural consternation and many have been the vigorous attempts made to justify the Spiritualistic view from the dreaded incursions of the telepathic theory. But we are now beginning to formulate psychological statements of so widely inclusive a character that, among reasonable and learned students, controversy on this score seems virtually at an end. The literature of learned societies engaged in Psychical Research has abundantly proved that there is ample and ever increasing evidence in proof of telepathy or mental telegraphy, and this rapidly accumulating evidence proves that we are now in possession of powers and faculties which we often employ unconsciously, but which we can learn to consciously direct, thereby lifting us out of the



class of the controlled into that of self-determining co-operators in the work of mental intercommunication. Simply spontaneous mediumship is intensely interesting and instructive, and wherever it appears it should be respectfully regarded and diligently studied; but tho genuine and valuable, it presents drawbacks as well as advantages, on account of the liability of controlled mediums to rest content with being simply receptacles of information from extraneous sources and therefore neglecting their own self-culture.

Genuine mediumship manifests itself in the form of susceptibility to mental influx from incarnate or discarnate entities, knowingly or unknowingly on the part of the medium. In all the phases commonly termed Physical, some material objects are employed in the production of results. Inspirational speaking and writing may be classed as entirely mental, while so-called automatic writing may be termed psycho-physical. Such literary productions as "Letters from Julia," by W. T. Stead, and "Letters From a Living Dead Man," by Elsa Barker, may fairly be regarded as results of mental mediumship supplemented by physical mediumship in some degree, for in both those notable instances the medium was avowedly influenced in both a mental and a physical manner by the communicating intelligence, and was perfectly willing that the communication should be made thru his or her manual agency. The much vaunted and greatly exaggerated dangers of mediumship are by no means confined to what generally bears the name of mediumship. The principal dangers, whenever and wherever they exist, proceed from a lamentable lack of self-assertion in general. Weak willed and weak minded persons, who have apparently hardly any will or mind of their own, are in a state of chronic susceptibility to whatever influence may predominate in their immediate surroundings; therefore, whether they are confessedly or apparently mediumistic or not, they are perpet-

ually swayed by wills and minds other than their own and, consequently, at all times liable to be led in any direction, whichever way the prevailing psychic wind is blowing. In the case of definitely mediumistic children we need only to provide them with the healthiest possible surroundings on all planes, moral, mental and physical. Instead of blindly rebuking them or hysterically attributing their eccentricities to disease or something else uncanny, it is necessary that they should be treated as delicate plants requiring special nurture, and most of all protection against inclement psychic influences. This is a general statement usually applicable to all extremely sensitive children, but there are exceptional cases where mediumistic children are unusually proof against susceptibility to undesirable influences in general, on account of their being constantly surrounded and protected by a powerful band of spiritual guardians who effectively shield them from all liability to common accidents and sickness. When a singularly sensitive child displays no disposition whatsoever to weakness or abnormality, but gives evidence of possessing some unusual gift, such a child may well be regarded as a modern seer or sybil and deserves to be honored as highly as were the seers and sybils of Greece in the palmiest days of Grecian culture and supremacy.

Mediumship when healthy and useful displays itself in a perfectly orderly manner, not in any weird display of terrifying or merely mystifying phenomena. When unwelcome disturbances occur, either mentally or physically, they should be handled firmly and fearlessly, but never should any violent protest be made against a phenomenon even tho it be of a most unwelcome character, because all anger, fear, and other disorderly emotions serve invariably to increase the disturbances we seek to quell. No arbitrary classification of unseen influences into two great groups called Good and Evil can stand the test of reasonable scrutiny, for no matter whether the com-



municating intelligences are incarnate or excarnate, they are simply human entities on one or other of the many human levels with which we are all frequently brought into contact. Highly susceptible persons, of both sexes and of all ages and all conditions, are influenced largely by the psychical containment of their immediate environment; it therefore often happens that the influencing agent is not so much one particular individual who may be definitely seeking to make a communication, as a sphere of influence composed of many entities, and of the effluence proceeding from them. These are two distinct senses in which the word Sphere can be rightfully employed, viz: (1) a company of affinitizing individuals, and (2) the emanations proceeding both consciously and unconsciously from such a company. An atmosphere or photosphere surrounds every individual, and, according to its nature, it attracts and repels. There is much more truth than many people have yet come to perceive in the universally proclaimed doctrine of universal affinity and attraction. What we most need is to learn how to make intelligent use of the perpetual operation of this undeviating law of affinity and attraction so as to draw to us and hold to us only such influences as we deem welcome and find beneficial.

The regulation of mediumship is the great need among Spiritualists, and among all who seek to pursue a line of experimental investigation in the ample fields covered by the general phrase, Psychical Research. The first great lesson for a student to learn is that we are not compelled to yield to any influence, but we are privileged to enjoy spiritual intercommunication at our discretion. We do not deny or condemn telegraphic and telephonic intercourse between individuals and communities because we know that it needs intelligent regulation and is liable to abuse. No denunciation of natural powers and gifts will ever do good, but must ever prove grossly fettering and misleading. Scientific research cannot be intimi-

dated by scarecrows, but it is legitimate to hoist signals and frankly point out where difficulties and dangers lie, not for the unwise and unworthy purpose of preventing navigation; but for the sole purpose of assisting navigators to avoid rocks and whirlpools, and so, men can steer their vessels, that in time of tempest they may not be submitted to shipwreck.

Mediumship is a fact in human experience and, as we are growing generally more and more sensitive, we shall find it continually on the increase. The student's task is a plain and honorable one, and one which must prove of immense general utility, viz: to face the psychic problem fearlessly and with noble resolution to turn all experiences to account for the general as well as for private weal. Cultivate and exercise all available faculties with the single end in view of extracting from all experience the boon of added knowledge, and all knowledge can be rendered serviceable for human progress.

## LESSON II.

### Nature of Mediumship

So much has frequently been written and uttered regarding the supposedly unnatural or supernatural character of all that stands out as distinctly psychical, that it seems necessary to work to counteract many false impressions widely afloat concerning the real nature of those gifts and endowments which have long been classified as, not only unusual or extraordinary, but as actually beyond or outside of the ordinary course of natural procedure. Words change their meaning, not only from century to century, but in much shorter periods of time; therefore, it has occurred that within the past few years a great revolution in terminology has been effected, especially with regard to all matters pertaining to the once called "supernatural," which is now often designated "supernormal" instead, a tentative word which scarcely conveys the idea we are now seeking to elucidate.

In that excellent and highly instructive treatise by William Howitt, "A History of the Supernatural In All Climes and Ages," published in Philadelphia in 1865, the learned author used language in common use in his day, but he gave to the old theological word "supernatural" a far wider and much more rational interpretation than it had commonly received.

If that now largely discarded term is still employed, it must be made to mean that which pertains to the higher planes of nature rather than that which is really above nature, for we cannot presume to say how far nature and natural law may extend, therefore, it is the height of presumptuous folly to dogmatize concerning what may lie outside the realms of nature, which are immeasurably wider than common knowledge may suppose.

All that may fairly be classed as Spiritual Mediumship was formerly attributed, quite unwarrantably,

either directly to Divine or else to diabolical agency; no middle ground being perceived between the possibility of direct intercourse with Heaven on the one hand and the Inferno on the other. Now the words Supernal and Infernal are in themselves easily accounted for, each being purely relative, as they only signify above and below the particular estate which is our present normal, i.e., average or accustomed condition.

If we receive a communication from a higher plane of intelligence than one on which we usually function mentally or morally, it comes to us from a "heaven," and if we get in touch with a lower plane of mentality and morality than one on which we usually consciously dwell, we may be said to receive influx from a "hell," employing language as used by Swedenborg.

There are many ingenious theories invented and industriously promulgated to explain away the simple facts of mediumship, but these curious substitute theories are far less rational and far more difficult to comprehend than the simple Spiritualistic and Telepathic interpretations which, when taken together, account reasonably for practically all the phenomena of an unusual character with which we are likely to be accosted.

The words most frequently employed to designate mediumistic experiences suggest nothing apart from an extension of well-known faculties. Clairvoyance means clear vision or extended vision. Clairaudience signifies clear or extended hearing. Clairsentience means clear or extended feeling. Psychometry is a word derived from **psyche** and **metron**, or metre, and meaning a method of measuring psychically or coming into conscious contact with what Professor William Denton called, "the Soul of Things," a title he gave to a fine work in three volumes, recording his extended investigations along this fascinating line of psychical research.

In the early days of the history of Modern Spiritualism very much was said about Mesmerism, and

the familiar terms "operator" and "subject" were constantly employed by writers on mediumship when they sought to define the methods whereby "spirit control" was effected. The old word "control" is still far too much to the front in Spiritualistic circles, and it has given rise to a vast amount of opposition to mediumship on the part of fair-minded and intelligent persons who are by no means averse to the idea of spirit-communion, but who rightfully object to the thought of one individual being actually under the dominion of another.

The now popular word Hypnotism has largely supplanted Mesmerism, chiefly because people are not properly called Mesmerists unless they follow the doctrines and practices of Anton Mesmer, from whose name the word Mesmerism was derived as clearly as Lutheranism came from Martin Luther.

Hypnotism is often closely associated with Mediumship, though not always correctly; and hypnotism itself is a word of wide and varied meaning, though its simplest and most obvious meaning is sleep-producing from **hypnos**, sleep.

Trance Mediumship is a familiar term and is often applied to states in which a sensitive person is said to be unconscious, though actual unconsciousness is impossible to define. We can be conscious on several distinct planes of consciousness; we are therefore conscious elsewhere and otherwise than commonly, when in some unusual condition, but unconsciousness is inconceivable and no one has ever attempted clearly to define it, except by using the word in a sense entirely relative.

Trance speaking was one of the earliest and most convincing phases of mediumship which drew and held the attention of multitudes of eager listeners in the middle of the 19th century, at a time when modern prophets and prophetesses were springing up everywhere and speaking as some power beyond their own volition gave them extraordinary utterance. It is recorded of the world-famous Cora L. V.

Richmond, that, when she was a little girl (Cora Scott), about twelve years of age, a school slate she was handling became mysteriously covered with writing and that she often passed into a trance condition and gave voice to statements and language far beyond her training and her years. During her long career as a platform orator this highly gifted woman has stood up vigorously for "trance mediumship," persistently declaring that her "guides" have spoken through her and that it has been they, not she, to whom the marvelous eloquence which has poured through her lips should be attributed. Without questioning any of the facts in such cases we deem it important to note that there was always willingness to yield to spirit-influence in such instances, therefore no evidence has been furnished tending to suggest that the medium was in any way coerced by extraneous intelligence, though at first her mediumship was entirely spontaneous and unexpected.

In the case of members of the family of the distinguished Judge Edmonds and other notable personages who figured prominently in the middle of the last century, the same general attitude toward those who are now often termed "invisible helpers" was continuously taken, and while there have undoubtedly been many cases of actual "control" of an uninvited and unwelcome character, these instances belong in a catalogue of abnormal experience and can be treated under the head of Obsessions, which are concomitants of mental and physical disorder not to be classed with any legitimate phase of mediumship. As tares and wheat may be found growing side by side in every field, it should cause no surprise that mediumistic gardens are no exceptions to the general experience. It is, however, a matter of concern that we should all put forth our best endeavors to encourage only the growth of wholesome fruits and thereby discourage and discountenance the perpetuation of those abortive



phases of mediumship, which being only derangements, should be treated as the pathological symptoms of a subject which is itself includable within a study of legitimate psychology. That mediumistic persons are exceptionally sensitive to various influences, both seen and unseen, is indubitably the case; but sensitiveness can be so handled and directed as to be made always a blessing, and therefore never a disadvantage. Highly sensitive children are often natural clairvoyants, clairaudients and psychometers, and while often they do not succeed well at school and seem incapable of profiting by ordinary modes of instruction, they are found to absorb a vast amount of knowledge in a psychical manner when placed in a refined and educative mental atmosphere.

Spiritual co-operation is a phrase which well expresses an idea of intercommunication between affinizing minds, and if such language is generally employed it will go far to put an end to savage and ignorant attacks on mediumship made by persons who, having heard only of "control," at once take up cudgels against what they feel must of necessity be a drawback to the cultivation of proper individuality.

Mrs. Emma Harding Britten and many other highly gifted inspirational orators of a past generation of Spiritualists always loudly proclaimed that they were guided, prompted, inspired and advised by their spiritual directors and inspirers, but never forced to act in accordance with the wishes of those intelligences. Indeed, in the two famous books "Art Magic," and "Ghost Land," a very strong protest was uttered against blind yielding to unseen influences without the exercise of one's own judgment regarding right and wrong and the dangers of weak surrender to hypnotic influence was clearly demonstrated.

It may be fairly contended that no entity incarnate or excarnate can ever have the right to compel sub-

mission, unless it be in cases where some one is about to commit a grievous crime upon another, in which case the exercise of forcible restraint over the wrongdoer would not be for the purpose of curtailing his individual liberty, but solely for the sake of protecting the freedom of another against unwarrantable assault.

The idolatry of spirits which has sometimes been displayed,—far more in the past than at present,—grew manifestly out of a misconception regarding the real nature and status of the individuals on the psychic plane with whom we were holding intercourse. If people believe that when they are not assailed by devils they are in direct communion with divinely appointed messengers,—angels of a race vastly superior to the human,—it follows naturally that implicit confidence should be placed in the advice given, and unquestioning obedience rendered to the givers; but after this misconception has been dispelled and we have come to know that our spirit-friends are of our own veritable kith and kin we do not yield them blind homage, nor do we cry “avaunt” when we become conscious of their approach.

To maintain a just balance between all extremes it is necessary for a sensitive to treat all unseen influences exactly as we ought to treat our fellow beings when we meet them in ordinary external intercourse.

Much stress is often laid upon the alleged impossibility of discriminating with regard to unseen influences, while we can see the persons who approach us physically, and therefore it is argued, we can be on our guard against undesirable familiars. This line of argument is so pitifully shallow and unconvincing when fairly analyzed that we dismiss it with a curt rebuke immediately we use our reason respecting our relations with men and women in the flesh in the course of ordinary social and business intercourse.

We all know that forgers and all manner of



swindlers fatten upon the lack of psychic perception or intuitive discernment which characterizes their unsuspecting victims. No one would deliberately cash a forged check, knowing it to be such; no one would invest in an utterly worthless proposition, knowing it to be valueless. How then, does it happen that so many persons are daily duped by sleek promoters of worthless enterprises and how is it that counterfeit money is exchanged for genuine currency of the realm? All the successful forgers and deceivers of all kinds are physically visible; they, indeed, take pains to draw great attention oftentimes to their personal attractiveness, and in consequence of the favorable impression they make externally, they succeed in plying their nefarious trade.

The only remedy for the present wide-spread liability to deception is a wise cultivation of psychical discernment (the discerning of spirits, mentioned among other spiritual gifts in the 12th chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians). Blind persons are frequently able to discriminate regarding character much better than persons with good bodily eyesight; that is because the blind are extremely sensitive and trust to intuition far more than do their seeing comrades. Feeling is a word of immensely far-reaching import, for we feel all over our bodies while our other four senses,—sight, hearing, taste and smell, are confined to special organs. We often hear sensitives say that they "sense" certain things. This is rather a vague and yet it is a highly expressive saying, for it means literally that they feel, all over at once, and without specifying detailed sensations they can only tell us that they have become aware that things are so, and they know not just how to describe the avenues through which this information has reached their consciousness. To become thus highly aware of facts not detectable through common outward channels, one requires to live a somewhat secluded life, not necessarily in a material, but certainly in a mental sense. To retire

into a secluded sanctuary means mystically to withdraw one's attention from exterior objects and concentrate attention upon a selected theme for meditation, regardless of environment. It is usually much more easy to thus withdraw attention inward when we are in quiet and congenial surroundings, but as circumstances are not always entirely controllable we need to have recourse to inward methods which border upon those practices which are often classed as Yoga by persons who delight in employing Oriental terminology. Sensitive persons usually require more quietude than ordinary, and most of all should we insist that mediumship should be cultivated and exercised, as far as possible, in healthful and beautiful surroundings.

Miscellaneous developing circles in dark stuffy apartments are detrimental to health in all directions. Natural darkness is not objectionable, for the night is as good as the day and there is a calm restfulness after sunset which is often highly conducive to psychic culture. Pure air and cleanliness in every direction are essential to the best results. Sufficient simple wholesome food and sufficient light comfortable clothing are requisite, but all heavy food and superfluous apparel should be rigorously eschewed.

For private exercise of mediumship any undisturbed atmosphere may suffice, indoors or out of doors, wherever the sensitive feels comfortable, and to make oneself comfortable is very important, for the best results are never forthcoming when a sense of discomfort obtains.

As differing temperaments are benefited by different special conditions, much must necessarily be left to individual experience for decision, but certain broad general rules can be laid down which it is always well to follow.

### LESSON III.

#### Mediumship and Self-Unfoldment

So many erroneous statements are often made to the effect that no one can be a medium and at the same time a well developed individual, that we deem it necessary to give utterance to our most positive views and most definite knowledge on this highly important topic. Normal mediumship is used in this lesson to signify an exercise of mediumistic ability knowingly and willingly without any constraint or yielding of one's sovereign right to decide what use shall be made of one's organism or any portion of it.

Among singularly well developed individuals, who not only permitted but encouraged mediumistic experiences, the famous journalist William Thomas Stead stood forth conspicuously as a bright and shining intellectual and moral light. Mr. Stead's well known experiences with inspirational and sometimes seemingly automatic writing are too well known to need any elaborate description, for his two extremely popular manuals, "Letters from Julia," and "How I Know That the Dead Return," have been circulated by hundreds of thousands of copies all over the world. It is the attitude of the man thru whose hand the communications were written which led to the publication of those treatises which now chiefly concerns us.

Far from being a common type of simple sensitive, viz: a yielding character easily influenced and readily impressed from almost any quarter, the founder of "The Review of Reviews" was a singularly determined and self-reliant man; one who would steadfastly adhere thru thick and thin to his convictions, regardless of any amount of opposition or persecution which might be hurled against him. So strong was he in his unqualifying adhesion to positions he had taken that he underwent imprisonment as well as ostracism, gladly and gloried in suffering for conviction's sake.

A man of such stalwart calibre is certainly no weakling, deficient in individuality, a mere subject of extraneous influences; on the contrary he demonstrates to a highly uncommon degree the power resident in human nature to exercise an immense amount of mental and moral freedom in the face of violent opposition. When such an individual develops and exercises mediumship we may rest assured that whatever is accomplished thru his organism occurs with his full consent and, indeed, positively at his desire. In all free contracts there must be two equally free parties, and in the event of normal mediumship this invariable rule is conspicuously demonstrated, for there is mutual desire and unity of purpose between the seen and unseen parties to the mediumistic transaction.

"Julia," or some other friend who has passed to the unseen side of life, wishes to convey a message to a mutual friend and requests Mr. Stead to allow her the temporary use of one of his hands for the purpose.

Without the slightest attempt at coercion she requests a privilege and it is granted at the will of the owner of the hand lent for the occasion. Thus are the communications made or the messages transmitted. When a friend still in the flesh desires to be accorded a similar privilege, that is granted on precisely the same conditions; it therefore follows that the one making use of the medium's hand is no more desirous of using it than the medium is willing that such use should be made of it.

In the case of trance and inspirational speaking, when a medium's vocal organs are brought specially into play, the mutual relation between guide and medium are just the same, for there must be a mutual understanding between the unseen inspirer and the individual thru whose lips the oration, poem, or aught else is voiced. To call all mediumistic processes disorderly and destructive is but to display gross ignorance and blind prejudice, and it is indeed

far more repressive of a right exercise of individual liberty to be submissive to the arbitrary dogmatism of anonymous dictators, who write books intended to scare the timid, than to allow our friends, whether incarnate or excarnate, to make some use of our organism when they and we are mutually agreed. But while taking a strong determined attitude in favor of normal voluntary mediumship we take an equally strong position against all coercive methods, and we cannot conscientiously endorse the pernicious habit sometimes indulged by sensitives of laying everything they say and do to outside influences, when it is necessary for their own self-culture that they should take upon themselves a reasonable share of responsibility for whatever takes place thru their instrumentality.

Three words: Normal, Abnormal, Supernormal, are frequently used to describe three distinct varieties of mediumistic experiences. By normal is usually meant simply the ordinary or usual, tho the word normal properly includes all that is healthy. Abnormal conditions are states of disorder or disease. But tho such is the right use of language, it was for a long time the bad etymological practice of many investigators to characterize all unusual phenomena as abnormal. This misuse of a word on the part of many distinguished authors and speakers of a past generation led inevitably to false views of clairvoyance, clairsaudience, etc., on the part of the general public, so much so that even in Spiritualistic circles, where mediumship was extolled and efforts made to encourage its further development, we often heard of abnormal states when conditions were referred to which are now generally described as supernormal in the proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research and other scientific publications dealing with psychical phenomena. Supernormal is a very much better word than abnormal to use in such connections, but even that needs explanation, just as supernatural requires to be intelligently explained or else



discarded. Normal is too wide a word, and so is natural, to be relegated exclusively to some easily prescribed domain. That which appears supernormal, and even supernatural, from a lower vantage ground is seen to be entirely normal and perfectly natural from a higher and wider viewpoint. The "astral realm," about which we hear and read much in these days, is fairly describable as a much larger realm than the generally accepted physical. It need not be thought about as immaterial or supermaterial, but only as composed of finer grades of substance than those which make impressions upon ordinary physical senses. We can readily conceive of at least four distinct grades of substances present at the same time in the same place, interpenetrating each the other. Ether is said to be universally present and is never wholly convertible into gas, liquid or solid; therefore, we can readily picture to ourselves the contemporary presence of three or even four distinct grades of substance.

Take the familiar illustration of a piece of sponge in a bowl of water soaked thru with the water. Sponge is in water and water in sponge at the same instant. Sponge is termed a solid, and water a fluid substance. But we can easily picture the presence of ether, finer and subtler than either sponge or water, present in both, while both are dwelling in its embrace. Ether must pervade the water which pervades the sponge, while the sponge is contained in the water which is in turn contained in the ether.

We may be conscious not only of two but surely of three worlds, or planes of consciousness, co-existently and as we consider different varieties and degrees of mediumship we shall readily see that mediumistic experiences can be scientifically and philosophically accounted for in a manner so simple and altogether natural as to disarm prejudice among all fair-minded investigators.

Charles Kellogg, produces sounds in twelve octaves. It is said that the ordinary human ear cannot

hear all of these tones, which are only different rates of etheric vibration; but delicate apparatus can register many more sounds than the average ear can detect.

Mr. Kellogg has trained his vocal chords to produce, and his ears to hear far more sounds than ordinary by living for several years on an average of nine months out of every twelve close to the heart of nature, on terms of friendly intimacy with birds, beasts and reptiles, and by subsisting upon a strictly vegetarian diet, which is unmistakably conducive to rendering the physical organism more open to delicate impressions than when a body is built up of flesh largely sustained by animal food. For the healthy and profitable exercise of mediumship it is imperatively necessary that the medium should be in a thoroughly normal condition mentally and physically, for while abnormality does not prevent or destroy mediumship it perverts it to the extent of rendering it fitful and unreliable. Very many are the errors properly attributable to illness of mind and body which lead to misleading results and often to suspicion of trickery being laid at an innocent medium's door. We are often apt to think only of the mental conditions necessary to secure the best results, and while these are of primary importance it is not safe to ignore physical aspects of harmony, for mind and body are far more intimately interlocked and their reaction is far closer than many students of psychic phenomena know or believe. The physique is, indeed, the most external of our bodies and therefore the furthest away from the centre of conscious activity, but it is thru this body that intelligence on the material plane must be ultimately expressed, consequently it is of high moment that the physical structure should be kept clean and wholesome in all respects. For even should the physical body be regarded merely as a window or a lampglass, very much must depend upon the integrity and cleanliness of such an outer instrument when

we are considering the revelation of light or general clearness of vision which can be ours in the most external world where mediumship is finally ultimate. Breathing exercises when regular and rhythmic can be profitably employed, though it is not always necessary to teach regular breathing, because healthy children breathe correctly from natural impulse. Whenever improper habits have been formed it is necessary to break them up, and systematic breathing in accordance with the simple natural plan of breathing, first thru one nostril and then thru the other at regular intervals, will be found extremely useful in inducing and restoring normality.

So very much is constantly being said concerning "harmonious conditions" that one is inclined to ask what constitutes these desirable conditions, and seldom is any sufficient answer given. Certain general rules can easily be laid down, but to be truly practical these rules must take different temperaments into consideration, for above all else it is essential that the state of a sensitive should be entirely comfortable, or the best results are never forthcoming. Reasonable investigation can never require that humiliating tests be applied to a sensitive, for any mental disturbance renders the annoyed sensitive nervously upset and therefore in some measure "out of condition." Public demonstrations of physical or test mediumship are usually far less than thoroughly conclusive on account of the extreme difficulty of securing necessary conditions; still enough may be demonstrated to awaken keen interest and induce investigators to pursue their investigations much further in more private places.

The Home Circle is a valuable institution whenever rightly conducted, but we must guard against inviting or requesting any person to join it who does not wish to do so or who is not in full accord with the dominant motive for its existence. The best time for seeking mediumistic development is when-



ever no business cares or domestic duties are pressing, and when the mind is able to give itself unreservedly to the work in hand.

As night is the negative portion of the twenty-four hours which constitute a day, it often happens that after sunset is the most favorable time for enjoying conscious contact with the spiritual realms. This is not because our spiritual helpers are more able to approach us during darkness than when sunlight is brightly illuminating the rooms we occupy, but because of our greater receptivity during the negative period of our day.

Sleep is generally more readily induced at night than in the brightest hours of day, but this rule is not invariable, for it sometimes happens that persons enjoy their profoundest slumber at midday when active duties compel them to earn their living thru the night. It is the reposeful frame of mind which one enjoys which contributes most to all truly desirable varieties of mediumistic experience, and it cannot be possible to enter fully into a welcome trance and thereby withdraw consciousness from the external place, while any duties pertaining to the outer side of life are demanding our attention. Though the word Trance almost invariably suggests unconsciousness to the untutored mind, this erroneous employment of the word by no means agrees with the best ancient usage. The 10th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles contains a narrative of Peter at Joppa passing into a state of exaltation termed trance, which carried with it greatly extended vision.

The main incidents in this remarkable and singularly beautiful Bible story accord exactly with many similar experiences of modern seers, for it is indeed true that time and place are negligible factors where spiritual revelations are concerned; the only vital matter being the interior condition of the seer.

It is said that Peter was hungry before passing into the trance condition and that he entered it while

food was in course of preparation. Lack of our usual quantity of food often aids interior vision, because a clogged body is always an impediment.

Reasonable abstinence is helpful on the path of orderly psychical development, but no fasting which injures or impoverishes the body can ever be an aid to genuine development.

Mental aberrations are often mistaken for illuminations and against this fatal blunder we need to carefully guard; but it is not likely that any disturbance of a serious character can occur when we keep our minds and bodies in a state of harmony. The widest spread delusion we encounter among sensitive persons, not well balanced is that of believing that because we have ignorantly and blindly submitted to undesirable influences in times past we are therefore compelled to go on thus submitting. This is the crux of the situation when cases of actual or alleged obsession have to be dealt with, and such cases are never found apart from some physical as well as mental or psychical disturbance. It is always a moot question whether psychical discord occasions physical distemper or whether physical disease produces psychical derangement.

To answer that question fully would require much greater knowledge of the intimate connection between mind and body than is commonly possessed, but we shall always find derangement of mind and body co-existent.

In the 18th century that famous American physician, Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, declared that the influence of mind over body was very great, and he added that no one had been able to entirely estimate that greatness. Though the words were uttered considerably more than a century ago, they remain true to this moment; it is surely, then, the part of wisdom to do all in our power to keep mental and physical conditions strong and pure together and, without attempting to dogmatise upon disputed questions in psychology, treat the human individual

as in all cases practically a unit. There may be three or even seven distinct planes on which the ego operates, concerning which deep students of Occult Science may speak confidently, but if that be so it still remains that these planes are so vitally interdependent and interpenetrating that the benefit of one contributes to the blessing of all and the injury of one to the handicap of all in some degree more or less remote or intimate.

To attempt to develop psychically in discordant or unclean surroundings is distinctly detrimental to health in all directions. Pure air, simple agreeable food, appropriate and comfortable raiment, sufficient bodily exercises and, as far as possible, a life free from corroding care and distressful anxiety, must be maintained as a rule of conduct if we are to reap substantial benefits through mediumship and avoid the dangers into which ignorance and negligence often plunge the unwary.

The famous Magic Staff of Andrew Jackson Davis," in all circumstances keep an even mind," is an injunction we must insist on heeding whatever difficulties beset our upward pathway.

## LESSON IV.

### **Mediumship Compared with Hypnotism and Mesmerism.**

From the very commencement of the modern Spiritualistic Movement in 1848 many persons, some friendly and others hostile to Spiritualism, have harped upon the resemblance between Mediumship and Mesmerism, and in recent years many have been the books and pamphlets published warning readers against cultivating or even allowing mediumship on account of the dangers of Hypnotism with which all phases of Mediumship are ignorantly identified by unknowing but extremely pretentious authors. Mesmerism is distinctly the cult of Anton Mesmer, a man who advocated the use of animal magnetism for the cure of disease, and who understood much concerning the manner in which one person can physically impress and influence another. The doctrines taught and the methods employed by Mesmer can easily be ascertained, as the biographies of that famous man are numerous. Without agreeing in all particulars with Mesmeric ideas and practices, the well-known Theosophical author, A. P. Sinnett, long ago published "The Rationale of Mesmerism," which gives an excellent account of the uses to which Mesmer's methods have often been put. Colonel Henry Steele Olcott, president-founder of the Theosophical Society organized in New York City November, 1875, employed mesmeric methods in his work of healing in which he was often eminently successful, especially in India, where the native populations are far more generally susceptible to psychic treatment than are average Europeans or Americans.

Mesmerism being properly a sectarian or denominational term applicable by right only to Mes-

mer's avowed followers, it has fallen into considerable disuse, and the wider and far more scientific term, Hypnotism, has widely supplanted it. Derived from the Greek word "hypnos," meaning sleep, the title of Hypnotist means sleep-inducer; therefore, if we use language correctly, we shall speak of hypnotic processes only when we intentionally refer to such as produce sleep either intentionally or unintentionally on the part of the hypnotizer or the hypnotized. A hypnotist is simply a person who acknowledges, and in some degree advocates, hypnotic practices; a hypnotizer is one who knowingly or unknowingly induces sleep in others; self-hypnotizing is a process of inducing sleep in oneself at will. Dr. Baker Fahnestock of Philadelphia wrote a very interesting and important book, entitled "Statuvelism," a good many years ago, in which he explained how it was possible to induce a state of superiority to suffering in oneself and in others without passing into any peculiar or seemingly unconscious state. There is indeed a wide difference between submitting blindly to the mental operations of a mesmeric operator or a medical or other hypnotist and choosing in perfect mental freedom to co-operate with some friend in or out of the flesh, between whom and oneself there exists a close tie of intellectual and moral sympathy. The old term "operator" and "subject" were always to some extent misleading, tho when rightly understood they serve fairly well to designate the relation actually subsisting in many instances between a doctor and a patient, especially when the former employs "suggestion" largely as a therapeutic agent. The stage hypnotist is usually an unscientific person who relies upon stage tricks and bombastic mannerisms to produce effects upon a company of spectators who often are in search more of amusement than edification. In cases where a man of powerful will and engaging personality succeeds in bringing several other persons under his influence during the course of a pop-

ular entertainment, we have to consider several factors which also enter into the production of certain common results in Spiritualistic seances. There is supposedly some agreement entered into beforehand between the performing mesmerist or hypnotist and the "subjects" who appear on the stage, and go thru their paces in obedience to the directions of the stage manager pro tem. That imposing personage generally speaks in a confident, authoritative tone, waves his hands in a somewhat hysterical manner and does several other "stunts," all of which have a tendency to impress the hired assistants who have engaged with the performer-in-chief to do his bidding to the utmost of their ability for a pecuniary consideration, and also to interest and mystify the spectators. When volunteers are called for, as they often are, it is usually found that those who actually carry out the suggestions of the dictator are either singularly impressionable persons who are unconsciously mediumistic in high degree, or persons of much more decided individuality who wish the experiments to prove successful and who, therefore, mentally aid the operator by vountary compliance with his suggestions. It is really the case that the most nearly perfect subjects are divisible into two extreme opposite classes, (1) persons whose sensitiveness to extraneous influences of all sorts is far greater than the average, and (2) persons whose individuality is so much more pronounced than the ordinary that whenever they resolve to assist at an experiment they greatly facilitate it.

Thomson Jay Hudson, in his famous book, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," in the section devoted to Hypnotism throws a vast amount of much-needed light on this entire problem, for he contends that it is a flagrant error in the popular mind to believe that we are at the mercy of hypnotists and all manner of uncanny influences in such a way as to rob us of all genuine individuality. If practically all persons in a certain social or individual condition were



evenly developed—as they decidedly are not at present—it would be a very easy task to insist upon the general accuracy of Hudson's position, which is undoubtedly, in the main, sound; but we cannot afford to overlook the often disconcerting fact that the great variety in development, which we encounter at every turn in all definitely designable groups of humanity, compels us to admit, no matter how reluctantly, that there are victims of unrighteous hypnotism in our midst, and some of these may be subjects of unseen operators. Demoniactal possession cannot be flippantly dismissed as merely an ancient superstition sometimes recrudescient in the present century; for tho it is harped upon far too much in many quarters it has to be reckoned with in many mental cases where usual methods of treatment prove persistently ineffectual. There is but one remedy for this sad condition in which unbalanced sensitiveness may be found, and that is to help them to the utmost of our ability to assert themselves as they have never asserted themselves before, and here comes in the place for right mental treatment which is the only genuine and effective antidote to the pliant mental condition which renders its victims creatures of unwelcome influences. Without discriminating clearly between voluntary and involuntary subjectivity one cannot discuss this intricate matter with any degree of clearness, for it naturally follows that highly individualized persons will yield to whatever pleases them at their own discretion, regardless of opinions entertained by others. We may be indiscreet and do many things which we regret afterward thru ignorance and obstinacy and still have no just complaint against our partners in unwise acts, seeing that we and they were mutually responsible.

It is recorded of Andrew Jackson Davis that he was mesmerized by William Fishbough, an upright, intelligent gentleman, previous to his attaining that "superior condition" which made possible the pro-

duction of those marvelous volumes which constitute the Davis library. In many instances a similar process has paved the way for spiritual enlightenment in greater or less degree; but it was not mental subjugation, but liberation, which was brought about in those remarkable and edifying instances. It is always wrong to seek to coerce another's will, for such a process cannot be harmonized with the Golden Rule which teaches us to do to others only what we are willing that others should do to us, and no one is willing to be coerced. If a patient goes to a physician who employs hypnotic methods and requests hypnotic treatment it is but rational to decide that the applicant is carrying out his own wishes in receiving the kind of treatment for which he has applied and for which he is willing to pay. In like manner, when persons form or join Developing Circles of their own accord and express a fervent desire to develop some phase of mediumship they are acting on their own responsibility. Caution and discretion are needed to steer clear of snares and pitfalls in all directions as we journey thru life, but we need feel no more dread of the unseen than of the seen. Indeed, we are in greater danger, when unduly susceptible to outward charms, from the physically visible than from any unseen operations, because what meets the outward eye and ear, and generally fascinates the bodily senses, makes a far stronger appeal to the average undeveloped man or woman than does any influence exerted on a subtler plane of nature. The reason for this is that a very sensuous person is very slightly developed on any inner plane, and therefore not sufficiently sensitive to respond greatly to influences working on interior planes. All who practice suggestive healing find that dense persons whose mental faculties are dormant find difficulty in comprehending psychic activities. They are consequently great sticklers for definitely material modes of treatment, while the sensitive nature which readily responds to silent, and



even to absent, treatment, marks a stage in human evolution far beyond that of the respectable boor or even of the everyday person who sees and feels little of anything which does not clearly manifest on the lowest or most exterior plane of matter. Many dense and ignorant persons are credulous and easily frightened; therefore they can easily be made to dread hypnotic and other influences; but it is taking a contemptibly mean advantage of ignorance and credulity to play upon the fears of the illiterate and the timid. Scientific hypnotism, like honorable mediumship, invites the closest examination on the part of fair-minded investigators, and we feel that we have a right to insist that no one should allow himself to believe that any influence can exert any hold over him without his own consent. Illustrations could easily be given in multitudes showing how it often comes to pass that hypnotic influences are exerted and yielded to, without our having to admit that anything has occurred to shake our confidence in the salutary doctrine of human free agency, tho it stands to reason that freedom, tho determinable as to quality, is highly variable in quantity in different persons and in the same persons at different stages of their development.

As the theater has presented many a version of George du Maurier's "Swengali" as a typical hypnotist, and the same author's famous "Trilby" as a typical hypnotized sensitive, it may be well to analyze that story, which, tho not strictly scientific, is nevertheless by no means devoid of scientific elements. "Trilby" is a French laundress who aspires to sing in public and desires nothing so much as to meet some one who can help her to shine on the lyric stage. "Swengali" promises to bring out her voice and make her a "star," and he fulfils his promise thru hypnotic agency. Such an incident by no means upsets the theory that the "subject" was willing to yield to the influence of the "operator," but it proves that so great was the

desire of the girl to accomplish a desired end that even tho the road to it was not entirely to her taste—for "Swengali" was not an altogether agreeable person—the attainment of the goal was, in her opinion, worth all it cost to reach it.

It is absurdly puerile to complain against any means with which we voluntarily comply when we set out to attain certain much-loved ends. Again we insist that the methods may be undesirable and some of the results pernicious, but that admission should only be taken as an admonition to exercise caution and look well over the ground before yielding—if we ever yield—to any outside influence. The higher and better way than the hypnotic method is the open daylight path of Spiritual co-operation. That is the great, broad highway up which we can all profitably travel, and to that road, and to that road only, do we purposefully direct the steps of our inquiring students.

## LESSON V.

### Mediumship and Human Freedom

From all that we have advanced in the four foregoing lessons the student will have gathered that the twofold object of this series of instructions is to explain as far as possible the nature of mediumship and to offer practical advice concerning its regulation. Regulation is not repression or suppression, therefore there is no kinship between the attitude taken in these lessons and hysterical protests against mediumship per se, as though it were a dangerous something tending to destroy individuality and therefore to be condemned in toto. There is but one complete method of regulating any experiences to which we are naturally liable and that is by so developing our self-conscious individuality that we allow nothing to invade our atmospheric belt or auric circle without our definite consent.

The great difference between voluntary and involuntary mediumship borders closely upon a distinction often drawn between mediumship and adeptship and to that topic we now draw particular attention. All students of psychic phenomena know that any phenomenon may proceed from one or the other of two opposite causes, i. e., either in response to the desire and expectation of one who experiences a result, or to the surprise, and sometimes also to the dismay of the percipient or recipient of such phenomenon. As the terms "operator" and "subject" are commonly used in mesmeric and hypnotic connections, so "sender" and "receiver" on the one side, and "operator" and "percipient" or "recipient" on the other hand, are rightfully employed in cases where definite psychic experiments are being purposefully and successfully conducted.

However much a "subject" may desire to be influenced by an "operator" we cannot entirely eliminate the matter of domination on the one side and

subjection on the other; but when we consider two or more perfectly willing co-experimenters, who are indeed fellow students, there is no such idea tenable as that of one controlling and the other submitting to domination. The persistence with which many Spiritualists insist upon clinging to the questionable and often objectionable word "control" is very largely due to the fact that rational spiritual philosophy has not made sufficient inroads into their consciousness to compel them to see that we are really only employing a telepathic method of communication between kindred entities when one is incarnate and the other discarnate as much as when both are still inhabiting the flesh. Far from regarding evidences of telepathy or mental telegraphy as disconcerting to the rational Spiritualists, or calculated to throw doubt upon spirit-communion, we insist that all these mental phenomena which prove inter-communication between affinizing minds here and now on earth, throw great and much needed light on the constitution of the surviving entity.

The good and useful word "survival" is one now happily much in use and it conveys a correct shade of meaning without ambiguity. To survive is to continue to live, neither more nor less than that simple widely-inclusive idea is suggested by the expression; then it necessarily must follow that if we continue to live in a post mortem state we must be living in that condition at present though clothed upon with a physical sheath which is laid aside at time of mortal dissolution.

Whenever this clear idea is adequately grasped all superstitious dread of spirit-communion vanishes, and with it all foolish idolatry of the so-called "departed," who cannot have departed in reality if they are still in communion with us and continuing to live their life of thought and feeling which constitutes them the particular individuals they are.

Mediumship is ridiculously misinterpreted in numerous instances and though on the 31st day of

March, 1915, the 67th anniversary of the advent of Modern Spiritualism was widely celebrated,—therefore nearer 70 than 60 years have passed since the "Rochester Knockings" heralded the commencement of a stupendous world-wide revelation of the actual condition of the psychic realm contiguous to our ordinary physical existence, and indeed interpreting it,—there are still to be found multitudes of superficial questioners raising the silly old question why their spirit-friends do not approach them directly, but use the organism of some strange person through which to deliver messages to the loved ones yet inhabiting terrestrial bodies, and the yet more foolish query why the spirits do not come to their immediate friends directly instead of going to mediums. The answer to the first question is that different degrees of sensitiveness determine susceptibility to psychic influx and regulate degrees of perception of physical objects and presences. The reply to the second question is that it is in itself unanswerable, because logically unaskable, seeing that clairvoyants invariably settle the matter before hand by saying, "I see such and such influences with you," or words to that effect.

Our spirit friends are not drawn to mediums with whom we and they are alike unacquainted; they are attracted to us, but it takes a sufficiently sensitive organism to see or feel their presence or to hear any sounds they may produce upon the psychic atmosphere. Gross ignorance is manifested by reasoning enquirers, therefore instruction in the laws governing mediumship is a pressing requirement of our times. Often and often we hear a scathing objection made to the moral defects of a medium, and many fastidious persons seriously dislike the idea that their friends should approach them through a supposedly unworthy channel. Up to a certain point we can sympathize with this fastidiousness, but it soon melts away on fair examination, for whenever our friends communicate with us through anyone we are present

in the place where the communication is made, and it is almost certain that we and not the medium have attracted the spirit. If we can deliberately go into the presence of a person of doubtful character and ask for a message from a spirit-friend, we should certainly not be surprised or cynical because our desires are so far met that one whom we seek to hear from endeavors to respond to our request.

Clairvoyance does not necessitate any actual fellowship between the seer and the individual seen and described any more than we need to postulate sympathy in thought and feeling between ourselves and all the persons and objects we observe upon a highway.

When clairsentience is the gateway through which information is received we need not suppose that there is any true affinity between the psychometer and the influences detected unless the feeling on the part of the percipient is specially agreeable, which is undoubtedly an evidence of some measure of interior accord. It is frequently at the earnest desire of both medium and sitter that a certain influence should manifest, and in such an instance conditions are usually highly favorable. Let it once be clearly and practically understood that fervent desire and confident expectation are the two great gates through which all revelations are vouchsafed, and we shall have less and less need to depend upon mediumistic channels beyond the limits of our own superphysical faculties; but unless these faculties are developed and exercised sufficiently to make us independent of extraneous aid, we must depend to a considerable extent upon our more sensitive neighbors. Mediumship can be both a bane and a blessing, and it is usually a combination of both, because of its spasmodic and unregulated character. There are two distinct kinds of mediumship broadly separable which are too often unseparated in our esteem, viz., a kind of useful observativeness,—which adds to our general knowledge and can always be



made to serve some useful end,—and a much more intimate association with entities and influences observed. There is no danger whatever in the increase of observational sensitiveness, for that only extends our knowledge; but susceptibility to influences in an emotional manner is often fraught with danger to imperfectly individualized persons. A familiar illustration based on everyday experience should suffice to show clearly the actual difference between these two sorts of sensitiveness. A person possessed of unusually keen sight or hearing must of necessity see or hear more than the average. This extension of sight and hearing should be made use of, but never permitted to dominate its possessor. No suffering results from extended power to observe and hear, but only from allowing oneself to be emotionally affected by what one sees and hears. We know full well how often it is said that very sensitive musicians suffer greatly from musical discords which less sensitive hearers fail to detect, and that they also keenly enjoy delicate and intricate harmonies which ordinary listeners fail to hear. This is undeniably true in fact, but it need not continue to be anyone's experience on the painful side, though it may continue, and constantly increase, on the delightful side. If we exercise will power and mental discrimination in the regulation of all our various faculties we shall soon discover that ability and necessity are far more identical.

We can listen attentively to whatever pleases us and drink in such melodies as carry charm, but because we have the capacity for listening equally to discords, and partaking of the vibrations which annoy us, we are by no means compelled to do so. Ability to drink tea accompanies ability to swallow any other liquid, but multitudes of total abstainers from alcohol in all its forms drink tea freely, and rarely refuse a cupful when it is offered to them, but though they have equal capacity for drinking wine and brandy, and they may often dine at tables

where those beverages are consumed by fellow diners, they simply do not partake of those stimulants. In like manner we can know of the existence of psychic presences and mingle with any sort of company and still remain immune from participation in any other emotional experiences than such as we elect to favor.

The first necessary exercise along the road of mastery over undue susceptibility to psychic influences is the practice of rigid concentration of attention at some point where our affections or our intellectual interests may be exclusively centered. Say that a number of different sounds are hearable at a certain time in a certain place and we desire to listen attentively to only one of those many sounds. We must not make an effort to shut out any of the others, but quietly and resolutely affirm our ability to confine attention exclusively to the sound selected. At first other sounds may remain audible, but as we persist in confining attention to one sound only, we shall find that all the others grow fainter and fainter until they have become wholly negligible. Should we then desire to select another sound and neglect to listen to the first one chosen, we can attend to the second as exclusively as we did to the first, and in like manner, if we please, select sound after sound until we have proved conclusively that we are able to use our faculty of hearing entirely at discretion.

When this excellent practice is frequently and successfully carried out on the common outer plane of our experience we can utilize the method to great advantage in the field of clairaudience, and thereby escape annoyance from physical distractions while listening attentively to some sound pertaining to the psychic region or astral plane on which our clairaudience is exercised. Precisely the same experiments can be conducted with tasting, touching and smelling. We can select a flavor, an odor, or a texture for examination and so concentrate upon one



only at a given time that no matter how many others may be co-present we pay no attention to them.

These exercises develop self-control in mental regions and are of priceless benefit in all departments of activity, in social and business life as well as in the field of expressly psychic exploration.

We all properly desire to turn our sensitiveness to good account if we acknowledge it and cultivate it, and it stands to reason in commercial life, as well as everywhere else, increased perceptiveness must prove an extremely valuable asset whenever it is properly regulated. To develop and exercise sensitiveness deliberately with some useful end in view is surely rational and praiseworthy, and such a course of procedure is the only effectual cure for that distressing unbalanced sensitiveness which ill-informed persons are apt to think is the whole of mediumship. We cannot exercise power in psychic fields unless we exercise self-regulation in the ordinary conduct of external life, therefore the exercises in concentration we advocate, and lay much stress upon, serve equally in cases where students are specially mediumistic and where they are not; for they invariably increase self-reliance and general efficiency by helping progress along the upward path toward eventual adept-hood.

It has seemed to many investigators who have not learned of the rational luminous way, that they must either abandon all interest in mediumship and turn their backs on psychic development altogether, or else submit to agonizing experiences fraught with injury alike to mind and body. To rescue these victims of misconception should be the happy work of truly enlightened sensitives. It may safely be affirmed that so far as we are practically concerned we can, if we resolutely will, determine exactly the class of influences with which we psychically consort, for it is always thought and affection, never exterior conditions, which regulates mental and spiritual consociation. We may often be in the actual outward

presence of much that is in no way related with us inwardly, and we can wisely make use of such trying experience to strengthen our characters by refusing to be annoyed by otherwise annoying influences. As in the life of a great city all sorts of sights and sounds are inevitable in the present perturbed condition of society,—but we can learn to surround ourselves with an auric sanctuary and pay no heed to surrounding perturbations,—so by an analagous act on the purely psychic plane we can grow unaffected by discordant influences and then begin the still higher mediumistic ministry of guiding and healing others.

## LESSON VI.

### A Study in Psychometry.

Tho many useful words are constantly employed to designate distinctive psychic gifts and faculties, the word Psychometry, employed by Professor William Denton, Joseph Rodes Buchanan and other well-known anthropologists of the 19th century, seems more widely inclusive and intelligently expressive than almost any other. Its only adequate equivalent in our immediate vocabulary is Clairsentience or clearfeeling. We often hear a sensitive person exclaim, "I sense so and so," and beyond that rather hazy statement we do not seem able to readily proceed. This reminds us of many a person's unsatisfactory "Oh, because," a phrase used far more frequently by women than by men, and often attributed to a woman's supposed intuition enabling her to feel in a general "altogether" way much that she cannot clearly analyze. Here we strike the primal difference between synthesis and analysis; between an inclusive perception of things in mass or bulk and a particular discriminative appreciation of details included in that bulk or mass.

A "sensitive" or "psychic" or "medium";—we can use whichever of these three titles we prefer without conveying more than one idea,—grasps in some more or less mysterious manner the fact that an object or a person possesses certain definite attributes and qualities without the perceiver having arrived at that conclusion by any rational process of examination and deduction.

Psychometers are measurers of psychic influences and detectors of influences too subtle to be discerned or apprehended by persons of only ordinary susceptibilities. Professors Denton and Buchanan, and many other able scientific men who have investi-

gated the psychic faculty displayed by highly sensitive men, women and children thru a long series of varied experiments, have collected abundant evidence to convince all but the stupidly sceptical that this faculty they have termed psychometric is one possessed by far more persons than we commonly suppose, and it is on its lower level a faculty possessed in high degree by bloodhounds and other sagacious animals often employed for detective purposes.

We need to discriminate unmistakably between a merely animal sensitiveness, which is sub-human and pertains only to the animal side of human nature, and a definitely human and deliberately cultivated and exercised faculty which marks a high degree of human progress; but as the greater contains the lesser and the higher includes the lower, the remarkable sagacity of a fine dog may also prove a valuable human asset. The main distinction which always needs to be kept steadily in mind between animal and human susceptibility to psychical impressions is that the former are instinctive and therefore involuntary, while the latter are the result of definite determination to acknowledge and utilize an indwelling ability. We all know that multitudes of men and women live constantly on a plane of consciousness very little removed above the animal, and that many of these unsophisticated persons are good and useful sensitives and can be employed to excellent advantage in Psychical Research work, and it is from the ranks of these that responsible mediums are perpetually recruited. A good natural psychometer who works only instinctively is a valuable find for scientific explorers of the psychical domain, but as such a person is likely to be too easily influenced by the minds of experimenters who have definite views of their own in many instances (tho not in all cases), we find that most records of psychometric revelations are probably less valuable than they would have been had the investigators

been completely unbiased in any direction.

It is probably much easier for an animal and also for a simple-minded child, to be unaffected by forethought and prejudice than for any thoughtful child of school age or for any normal man and woman to be thus unaffected, until we reach a stage approaching adepthood, which is a condition resulting from persistent cultivation of super-ordinary powers of observation by means of definite self-regulative processes.

The natural impulsive sensitive who exercises a dog-like psychometric faculty is very often correct and therefore furnishes abundant evidence of the utility as well as of the reality of the psychometric faculty; but a danger arises in the case of human beings as a result of their mixing their own fancies and unwarranted speculations with their unpremeditated impressions, and in cases where a determined experimenter is conducting experiments with such a sensitive it follows frequently that the sensitive, who is thoroughly genuine, reflects the opinions of the investigator with whom she is working to such an extent that thought-transference pure and simple is the true explanation of the impressions given forth by the psychometer. When experiments are made with dogs the case is usually different, because when sensitive animals are employed as detectives, some article belonging to the missing person is presented to the dog who sniffs the article and then follows a mysterious trail apparently using a remarkably keen sense of smell. Everyone gives forth a characteristic emanation at all times involuntarily and of necessity as a result of temperament and condition, and whenever an animal or a person is endowed with keener perception of this than ordinary, psychometry is demonstrable.

We hear of "first impressions" and their frequent accuracy. The cause of their correctness is that they are generally far more simple and instinctive than any deductions we may draw from careful observa-

tion, but no mere impression can equal the profundity of genuine intuition, which includes all the elements in accurate impressions and much besides. To prove the psychometric faculty is not located like sight or hearing in a single pair of organs, but is distributed over the entire body, the article should be handled but not looked at, as the sense of sight usually interferes with that of simple feeling. The psychometer absorbs information by a process of psychic suction, therefore it matters little (if at all) whether the article to be delineated is placed in the hand, on the forehead, at the back of the head, under the feet or on the chest, for delineations are possible with any of these five positions.

Other positions also have been selected for the placing of an article to be examined psychically and equally good results have followed. (2) It is imperative that a psychometer should have no desire to arrive at any special conclusion for any purpose whatever. This condition is difficult to fully meet when a sensitive is employed by an experimenter who strongly wishes an event to turn out in a certain way, or who entertains strong secret beliefs that an article has had a certain history or is the property of an owner possessed of certain definite qualities and peculiarities. These hampering presuppositions entertained by investigators militate greatly against lucidity, and they are utterly unscientific, tho difficult to entirely avoid. The scientific attitude in the face of every projected investigation is one of pure agnosticism and surely it stands to reason that if we feel certain we already know the facts in a case, we are not consciously in need of further information, tho it is often extremely gratifying to be assured that we are right and to have our deductions confirmed by witnesses. (3) Whenever a psychometric experiment is conducted deliberately the sensitive should be temporarily at rest from all other engagements. A free mind is essential to complete concentration,



and without that prime requisite to success, results are apt to be confused and confusing.

The theory of psychometry explains many a mystery otherwise insoluble and it interprets rationally numerous cases of healing thru contact with magnetized and consecrated articles which would remain darkly mysterious were it not for the light shed by psychometry. Dr. J. R. Buchanan was so enthusiastic that he declared the cultivation of this faculty heralded the dawn of a new era in civilization, and so it does if it is developed intelligently and impartially along noble lines.

Graphology is by no means despicable, for it can be proved that caligraphy throws some light on character; but a moment's thought should suffice to convince us all that handwriting is easily imitated by expert forgers, and there is surely an immensely wide difference in character between a forger and an upright man whose writing is imitated successfully for deceptive ends. The distinction between the standpoint of a graphologist and that of a psychometer is one of the widest thinkable opposition, because the former depends avowedly upon a result of mechanical action (writing) which can be learned and copied, and the latter relies solely upon internal evidences with which outward actions have nothing to do.

It must be self-evident that if external acts like writing could not be successfully imitated, forgeries could not succeed; therefore, while we admit, for it can frequently be proved, that handwriting betrays character to some considerable extent,—especially when one writes carelessly, bestowing no thought on the mechanical procedure—still the only infallible proof of character is to be found in those subtle and inevitable emanations which proceed spontaneously from us as the direct result of our interior condition. Discrimination is frequently necessary to decide between chronic and immediate conditions. The first impression received by a keenly sensitive psychome-



ter results from the actual condition of the person whose hand is taken when there is personal contact, but as there is only temporary agitation, inducing the symptoms of nervous irritability or hasty temper, this impression soon wears off and the next impression penetrates far more deeply into the more permanent state of the person undergoing psychic investigation.

When an article of clothing, or anything constantly carried about the person and used very frequently, like a pocket knife, a locket, or a watch, is used for delineative purposes, a sensitive will probably get a correct first impression because such an article has become permeated with the psycho-physical exudations of its owner and wearer, and general conditions are absorbed and retained to a far greater extent than results of transient emotions, unless such be extremely vivid and enter very deeply into the emotional life of the one experiencing them. Psychometry serves also for discovering the inner atmosphere of rooms and entire buildings.

Whenever a sensitive feels a distinctive aversion to a place or an intense distaste for the society of a person, these warnings should be heeded, but it is necessary to point out clearly in a lesson that personal aversion by no means necessarily reflects discredit on the object of aversion; it only proves incompatibility of temperament or lack of mutual adaptability of place or person. In the case of rooms or buildings, the magnetism of places is as unmistakable as that of individuals, and this is due to human associations far more than to climatic and other extraneous causes. Every place and person has its own peculiar atmosphere and photosphere, and on the astral atmosphere which serves as a palimpsest; everything is inscribed which takes place in the edifice or affects the emotional life of the man or animal. Psychometry is more than clairvoyance or clairsaudience, and more than both combined, because it is all-inclusive. It cannot be properly termed

an additional sense, or the intensification of any one of our five senses, tho touch seems more nearly related to it than any of the other four. A psychometer gets at the root of the five senses and deals with the palm of the psychic hand, so to speak, out of which the five digits proceed.

All readers of hands know that the palms reveal more than the fingers; but each digit has a tale to tell peculiarly its own. A psychometer by getting at the root of the senses can ascertain more than can possibly be discovered by employing the senses separately and severally, therefore, psychometry when highly cultivated reveals all that phrenology, physiognomy and chiromy can reveal, and more also. In saying this we do not intend in any way to slight or deprecate the work of phrenologists, physiognomists and chiromy; we only mean to insist that as we become increasingly sensitive to interior suggestions we shall have less and less occasion to depend as hitherto upon those imperfect opportunities afforded us for making examinations limited by the testimony of the outward senses.

To exercise psychometry perfectly one has to become wondrously freed from ordinary anxieties and from all prevailing tendencies to be influenced by appearances, for no sooner do we begin to take account of external symptoms than we transfer attention from within to without and thus become muddled in an endeavor to collect evidence from two opposite directions at the same moment. Perfect mental serenity and complete disregard of appearances is the sine qua non when seeking to perfect ourselves as psychometers. To the extent that we attain to that amazing degree of freedom from the pressure of extraneous influences, but no further, can we lucidly and reliably exercise our genuinely psychical possibilities.

## LESSON VII.

### **Healing Mediumship—Its Nature and Rightful Exercise.**

Among the many phases of mediumship constantly enumerated there can be none so wide-reaching in beneficent results as the ministry of healing.

In the early days of the career of Modern Spiritualism, this important subject occupied a very prominent place in the esteem of Spiritualists; but after awhile the incessant clamor for sensational phenomena took such wide possession of the minds of multitudes that were ensued an era of sensationalism during which the work of healing was relegated to the background and doubtful manifestations occupied the stage to such an extent that tricksters multiplied, who assumed to possess mediumistic gifts of the most amazing nature, and many humiliating experiences followed. During that critical and storm-tossed period in the history of Spiritualism the movement known as Christian Science arose, and many other movements came to the front, more or less similar to that inaugurated by Mrs. Eddy, which attracted wide attention on account of the stress laid on healing as a matter of central and supreme importance.

Many defections from the ranks of Spiritualists occurred in consequence of these causes, and the Spiritualistic movement sustained a temporary setback, for no cause can truly flourish if it allows the most practical and beneficent feature of its ministry to fall into comparative oblivion. Healing Mediumship never faded entirely out; there were always psychics operating both in public and in private who demonstrated the power of the spirit to vanquish ailments both of mind and body; but only in rare instances have Spiritualists in recent years brought healing

mediumship to the front as it was brought in the days of the famous healer, Newton, a record of whose marvellous work is preserved in a book entitled, "The Modern Bethesda," published many years ago in New York.

This marvellous healer always claimed to be a medium, and he declared from first to last that the power of the spirit working thru him derived directly from the operation of his "guides," who, when on earth, were active in the same sort of ministry, and unhesitatingly declared that there were no accounts of healing contained in any ancient Scripture which might not be duplicated in the present day. In this contention he was clearly logical and right, and his own stupendous work abundantly sustained his claim.

It may well be asked, however, whether it is not an error to attribute the gift of healing to the action of individual human spirits, seeing that the power that heals may be rightly regarded as an indwelling spiritual force possessable by every human being and therefore exercisable by any one who acknowledges it faithfully, without having recourse to any extraneous individuals. This subject deserves careful consideration and cannot be lightly dismissed as it is a theme of great importance. We may fairly take an intelligible middle ground, between extreme positions by calling attention to that law of spiritual co-operation which is incessantly in action whether we know it or know it not.

Nothing can be more self-evident than that the law of human existence necessitates inter action between human entities. We are not born without parents, nor do we live and thrive as we grow up as isolated entities. All our joys and sorrows, banes and blessings are interactive, so that much of the health of one is the boon of all and the sickness of one is a menace to all. Every sanitary regulation is based on this admission and, without accepting this proposition, no one could feel justified in pre-

scribing any regulations for public conduct. Now, while it sounds well to say that we as individuals are sufficient unto ourselves,—or if we are religiously inclined, to boast of our dependence solely on Deity,—we do not find that the facts of our existence bear out these claims at all fully, for no matter what our creed or school of thought and practice may be, we all give evidence that we are far more interdependent than independent. It is impossible to point to a single denomination of peculiar people who claim that their dependence is entirely upon the Divine Spirit working directly thru them, without noticing that they have healers and teachers among them and that they make a great deal of special ministrations of specially appointed or selected persons. All sorts of explanations may be offered to account for this seeming inconsistency, but it nevertheless obtains, and nowhere more prominently than among Christian Scientists who repudiate healing mediumship and claim that it is only thru acknowledgment of truth, and trust in its potency to produce perfectly healthy results in the body of one who trusts in its efficiency unfalteringly, that healing can be accomplished.

The practitioner is always a medium in one sense if not in another, and it is not difficult to realize how probable it is, in many instances, that some afflicted person is helped by an unseen instead of by a physically visible helper. When we have entirely got away from the lingering superstition that our comrades who have passed from mortal sight have been removed from the field of human activity we shall not regard mediumistic experiences as radically different from ordinary occurrences of like nature between persons all now enrobed in flesh. Absent healing, a topic now discussed widely among all interested in mental therapeutics or psycho-therapy, throws unlimited light upon the problem of healing mediumship and so far simplifies the subject as to render it immediately intelligible. Spiritualists of



a generation or two ago usually spoke and acted as tho they could derive help from those commonly called "departed," but not from each other still on earth. Many mental scientists have insisted, and done much to prove, that we can help each other mentally here and now in a psychic manner, but they have ignored,—and in some cases even undertaken to deny,—that we can receive equal help from those who have "shuffled off this mortal coil." A wise position, commending itself to a rapidly increasing number of open-minded thinkers, is that we can and do give and receive benefit in both of these seemingly distinct, but in reality closely identified relationships. A true healer must always be an educator, for unless a patient is taught something concerning the law of health which must be observed after an ailment has been conquered, a relapse is very likely to ensue. It is precisely at this point that a distinction must be clearly drawn between a competent healer and one who is simply a magnetizer. Far too much stress has often been laid upon "animal magnetism" among persons who have claimed to be "healing mediums," and for that reason spiritual healing was largely overlooked by Spiritualists at a time when Christian Scientists and others were making strenuous efforts to convince the public that this much over-estimated animal magnetism was a source of danger, not of benefit to humanity. Much of the controversy is now practically over because general enlightenment regarding healing processes is far more extensive than it was even a few years ago; but there is still much need for a clear discrimination between the impartation of personal magnetism and the direct operation of spiritual force, utilizing the personality of a medium in the conveyance of healing potency from the higher spiritual realms, for the relief of the afflicted. It stands to reason that if animal magnetism is the prime requisite for healing, all confidence in spiritual intelligence may be largely discounted,



for in that case a healthy physique, and probably some idea of how to manipulate the body, would constitute the essential qualifications of a competent healer. That animal magnetism has its proper place and use we gladly admit, and we could never think of using so disagreeable a phrase as "malicious animal magnetism" unless it were proved that 'a magnetizer was actuated by malicious intent and sought to employ some method of magnetizing to accomplish a nefarious end. When good-natured persons make passes over sick persons with the hope of relieving them from suffering, no thought of malice can possibly enter in, and it is indeed often true that benevolent unseen helpers co-operate with these magnetizers and enable them to accomplish much greater good than would otherwise be achievable. It is on account of this fact that physical manipulation has become so greatly intermingled with genuine spiritual healing, and it must be remembered that a physical performance such as "making passes" over the body does not prevent spiritual healing from taking place, tho in frequent instances the power of the spirit is more convincingly displayed when there is no admixture of physical manipulation. It is easy to understand that a strong healthy man or woman possessed of a superabundance of physical vitality should be able to impart some of this surplus by laying on of hands, and it is equally easy to comprehend how a benevolent band of spiritual entities, purposefully working to heal the sick, should co-operate with such well-meaning magnetizer who is very likely a good physical medium, knowingly or unknowingly.

But giving all credit that is due to physical methods of a rational order, we can readily see how extremely limited must be the field of action of all healers who depend exclusively upon physical contact with their patients. Owing to a desire to greatly enlarge the field of beneficent activity, recourse has often been had to the magnetizing of pa-

per, linen, flannel, etc., and sending these magnetized articles to sufferers at a distance from the home of the magnetizer. There has arisen the claim that such things afford links not only between healer and patient in the strictly physical sense, but also in a definitely psychical manner, and in addition to the general theory of psychometry has been established the statement that healing spirits employ these magnetized articles as means of connection between themselves and the invalids who are often greatly helped by employing these peculiar agencies. It is impossible to deny that these methods are very ancient, and equally impossible to prove them valueless; however, they are not so necessary in all cases as some persons have supposed. In the New Testament many references are made (especially in the Acts of the Apostles) to practices in vogue in the earliest Christian century, which were by no means original with Christianity. Among the most conspicuous of these is the story of articles of wearing apparel taken from the body of apostles and placed on sick people for the purpose of their recovery. This usage carries us back to Greece and Egypt, and reminds us of the practices of the *Therapeutae* from whom we derive our much-employed word therapeutics. That there is a very close connection between ancient and modern healing methods cannot be questioned by students of healing ministries thru a period of at least 3000 years, and as spirit-communication is a fact in Nature and cannot be confined to any special clime or race, it reasonably follows that healing mediumship has been practiced consciously and unconsciously all over the world and in all ages. The fact that one may be ignorant of spiritual collaboration by no means disproves its reality. It is at this point that Spiritualists often display less intelligent appreciation of an existing situation than might be rightfully expected of avowed students of the philosophy of psychical intercommunication. It is not so much what we

believe as what we love; not so much what we know as what we desire to accomplish, that links us with unseen helpers; it therefore follows that clairvoyant testimony is often given to spiritual co-operation which may take place without any knowledge on the part of the healer who intellectually disowns it because it has never been proved to his satisfaction.

Many physicians are kind-hearted men and women who seek to do their utmost to relieve the distress of all who apply to them for aid. Many of these doctors are entirely agnostic in their thought so far as spiritual agencies are concerned, and they say frankly that they know nothing about spiritual helpers in the work of their profession. We can readily accept their assertions at face value; but ignorance on the mundane side does not imply equal ignorance on the psychical side of our existence, and it is never true that simple ignorance of the spirit world proves lack of co-operation therewith. We will take a typical example: A doctor who is mediumistic, but knows it not, is doing his or her utmost to overcome a painful or obstinate ailment in a patient who is also more sensitive than he knows. All that appears on the outer plane is that two persons are together in the relation of healer and patient, but a clairvoyant may see others also, because the spirit-associates of both doctor and patient are interesting themselves in the case and doing their utmost to help in the good work attempted. It often happens that persons are helped in mysterious ways that they cannot adequately explain by reference to any or all of the knowledge at their outward disposal. In such instances we hear vaguely of the operation of "the healing force in Nature," but no intelligible explanation is forthcoming as to the nature of that healing energy nor of the method of its operation. It is acknowledged to exist and operate, but it remains mysterious. We often hear of "suggestion," an

extremely comprehensive word often adorned with many prefixes, such as "auto," "heter," etc., but to employ academic terminology is not to explain any vital process adequately, for at the utmost such use of language can only provoke desire for fuller information on the part of an enquiring public. Suggestion is not an end in itself, but it is a powerful means to an end in many instances, and it has its place in healing mediumship indubitably. The healing medium may be (and often is) an illiterate person, sometimes even an untutored child, but that makes no difference from a spiritual standpoint, because only sensitiveness of organization, and freedom from psychical obstructions, is necessary to the expression of any phase of mediumship. The question becomes rather more difficult to handle when prescriptions are given purporting to emanate from "Indian Guides," who have figured very largely among healing mediums in America, on account of medical legislation ruling that no one must practice medicine without a license. Spiritualists have often fought against medical monopoly on the ground of its unconstitutional character and many patients have testified gratefully to their rescuance from painful maladies thru the good offices of mediumistic persons who have been arrested for daring to do good to their suffering neighbors without bowing before the Moloch of medical tyranny. But even should it be found illegal to prescribe herb tea unless one is the proud possessor of a diploma or certificate from some acknowledged medical college, the work of the spiritual healer cannot be interrupted by any legislation whatever, for it can be carried forward silently or thru the agency of music, and in numerous other ways into which the practice of medicine and surgery does not and cannot enter. It is feasible to insist that no one should administer drugs or perform operations without having become duly qualified, but happily, healing mediumship does not consist

in giving drugs, or in using surgical instruments, for it is an efficient substitute for those often barbarous practices. When a bone is fractured or a joint dislocated, a competent surgeon is the proper person to correct the misplacement or repair the damage, no matter whether that qualified anatomist has graduated from a special school or not; but in the multitude of nervous cases which are now prevalent healing mediumship often proves an all-efficient panacea after medical treatment has been weighed in the balance of bitter experiences and found lamentably wanting.

The old question in *Macbeth*: "Can'st thou minister to a mind diseased?" may well be put to the healing medium, and it is often answered fully in the affirmative. Shakespeare told us of a good doctor declaring that in this each one must minister to himself, and such is indeed true, but just as a physician may administer medicine; but the patient must take it,—and the same with advice if it is to prove of any service,—so in the field of psychic healing there is much for a patient to do in changing the current of his own thoughts and treading henceforth along a new mental pathway marked out by the competent and kindly healer.

It is never denied, so far as we know, in any medical or other circles, that many deep-seated and long-standing disorders are undeniably traced to some "rooted sorrow" which no drug or scalpel can remove. It is often only thru the ministrations of mediumship that this grief can be assuaged, and therefore without any reference to magnetic passes, or aught else external, mediumistic persons may minister in ways unique and competent. Bereavement is frequently followed by a general lowering of the tone of vitality in the bereaved person, and the sorrow occasioned by an actual physical dissolution is greatly augmented by the dense materialism of relatives and friends and the odious unsanitary habit of "going into mourning." A dense veil of sorrow



encompasses the grief-stricken sufferer, which no magnetism and no medicine can dissolve. It certainly sometimes happens that a little strength is given by a vigorous manipulator and sleep is sometimes induced by mental suggestion; but despite this alleviation of distress, the root of the matter remains untouched in the case of keenly sensitive and tenderly affectionate natures. Persons of somewhat callous feeling and usually exuberant temperament may "get over" bereavements easily and quickly, but the tender-hearted and less buoyant suffer immensely and oftener grieve more in silence than aloud. It is this silent brooding sorrow that undermines health and eventually breaks down a constitution beyond recovery. The healing medium, in consequence of mediumship, can and often does so far alleviate this pitiful distress as to restore the sufferer from grief to health and buoyancy; indeed numerous are the cases which have been so successfully dealt with spiritually that a new lease of life has actually been taken and the person helped has gone forward to the enjoyment of a fuller, happier and far more useful life than he or she was capable of living before the affliction came, which was turned into a blessing thru spiritual ministrations.

Healing mediumship is no rival of anything else; it is an infusive and diffusive influence working thru all honorable and useful agencies. A healing medium need not be a person exclusively devoted to a special work apart from common industries, for very often the most successful healing is accomplished thru very ordinary channels.

As music is extremely popular, and it is now brought within the reach of almost everyone, we deem it of great importance to insist that lovers of music who can also display some renditional ability should consecrate their beautiful gift more largely to the direct work of healing than has yet been widely attempted. Mechanical music may answer well enough for simple entertainment and



even a victrola may be pressed into healing service by a discriminating selector of records who purposefully choses certain selections because of their helpful vibratory suggestiveness. But it is the human voice in song, even more than in speech, which can become a powerful healing agent, for thru this medium the inner breath (prana) can be conveyed thru the instrumentality of outer breathing and it is pranic energy which vitalizes and tranquilizes as nothing external ever can. As our unseen helpers are ever ready to co-operate with us in every benevolent undertaking, we never need to invoke kindly spiritual beings as tho it were difficult to get in touch with them, as tho they needed persuading to lend us their kindly and efficient aid; for they are ever ready and always within call. It is by quiet confidence, coupled with sincere desire to be of real service, that we mingle our aspirations with the intentions of the hosts of light, and as we grow more and more nearly universal in our desire and determination to bless humanity we shall become increasingly aware of the law of spiritual co-operation and acknowledge our true fellowship relation with those in spiritual spheres whose special mission it is to lead incarnate humanity out of the paths of error, and its consequent suffering, along the highway of health and peace, which is the road of righteousness.

## LESSON VIII.

### **The Law and Gift of Prophecy—Its Nature And Exercise**

Among the nine gifts of the Spirit enumerated in the 12th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians we find Prophecy extolled above all others. In the 14th chapter of the same epistle the apostolic writer gives his reason for thus exalting prophecy when he declares that it edifies the entire Holy Assembly. The Church referred to so frequently in the New Testament is unquestionably a spiritually federated company of enlightened individuals who form a mystical corporation called the Body of Christ, in which all the members are united by a bond of common fellowship, pursuing the same high ideals and unitedly conscious of their work as world-enlighteners. Among these variously illumined men, women and children, various gifts and endowments are displayed, all emanating from the same Divine Source, called the One Spirit.

None of these qualifications could be dispensed with, for all are necessary to the upbuilding of the entire Spiritual community and the proper discharge of the manifold functions of such an organization. But tho all are necessary to the completeness of the organism, which is a perfect Human Body consisting of members and organs, each fulfilling an appointed end of predetermined service, and no member can rightfully despise another, all being honorable and useful, still the rank of Prophet is in a sense higher than that of any other type or member. We know full well that we can sustain physical existence personally, and do fairly efficient work along many lines, tho deprived of such serviceable members as hands and feet and even of eyes, but brain and heart are indispensable to con-

tinued existence, and if these organs were removed it could not be easy to replace them by artificial substitutes, even tho surgery were to make such extraordinary progress as to introduce artificial heart and brain, which now appears highly improbable. A sense of relative importance is never inconsistent with due appreciation of every part of our complex human mechanism. In like manner we are justified in esteeming some spiritual gifts or endowments as more nearly indispensable to human welfare than are others.

But if Prophecy be placed in so exalted a position as to tower above all other gifts in an illumined fellowship, we ought to clearly understand what this Prophecy is and what are the special functions of a true prophet or prophetess. Seership is the other name of prophecy, therefore seers and seeresses are the same as prophets and prophetesses. There are at least four distinct kinds of vision, or four attitudes of vision, two of which are common to ordinary persons at all times and everywhere, and two of which are specially characteristic of those who exercise the gift or power of prophecy. Our two common everyday visual attitudes are, as we well know, looking outward and looking backward; for we all exercise the faculty of exterior observation more or less perfectly, and we all employ memory in some greater or lesser measure. The prophet is one who turns his gaze inward rather than outward and forward instead of backward, thereby becoming possessed of kinds of information to which non-prophetic persons are perforce strangers.

To the four attitudes of vision already enumerated and described we may well add a fifth, viz, looking upward and looking downward. The ordinary person may be said to usually look in three directions—outward, backward and downward. The prophet also looks in three directions—inward, forward and upward. "I will lift up my eyes to the hills whence cometh my help," is figuratively and literally sug-

gestive of the prophetic attitude, for we do, in every sense, derive far more inspiration and enlightenment by upward than by downward gazing. The prophets are also spoken of as retiring into quiet and retired places.

"In the mount" is a Biblical phrase descriptive of the position of Moses at a time when he received the plan for the erection of the Temple of Solomon, which typifies a truly federated humanity. Elijah enters into a cave or cleft of a rock and in serene retirement from the outer world receives information concerning spiritual realities otherwise unattainable. The great prophets or prophetesses of ancient Israel, like their early Christian successors, were all accustomed, according to the narratives in our possession, to betake themselves to sequestered places and there listen to a Voice heard only in silence.

It is not incorrect to identify bards or poets with prophets, for almost all the finest and most illuminating prophetic utterances extant are practically poetry. Not necessarily do prophets prophecy in rhyme or in stately blank verse, but they employ similitudes which are as true for all periods as for the particular time when the words are spoken.

Edwin Markham, himself a noble poet, pays sublime tribute to the great messages which the world's inspired and inspiring bards have given to all ages, and these heroic poets have proved prophets always in the fullest meaning of the term. We are all familiar with Robert Browning's splendid line in **Abt Vogler**, "'Tis We Musicians Know." By the word musician in that connection he unquestionably implies poet-prophets, who may indeed be gracefully styled "sweet singers in Israel."

To the vulgar mind a prophet is a curious somewhat uncanny person who doles out more or less vague and terrifying predictions of disasters about to befall communities and individuals. The amount of pessimistic rubbish mistaken for prophecy is enough to justify unenlightened persons when they

sneer at prophecy altogether and point to the masses of unfulfilled predictions which have caused mischievous dread in the minds of numerous timid and credulous individuals. If such prophets were only placed in popular esteem where they rightfully belong in the Frog Ministry (vide Rev. XVI), their gruesome utterances would not cause the needless alarm and mental suffering they often occasion, but there seems to be a fixed tendency in many perverted minds to credit as true, or at least as highly probable, whatever is calamitous, and from that unreasonable cause springs the misplaced confidence placed in false prophets who are often only intensely hysterical and not intentionally deceptive.

We read a great many prophecies made by sensational neurotics which are never fulfilled. Dates were set for earthquakes and other terrible calamities to occur in California during February, 1914, but the month passed without any of these terrors eventuating. It is never safe or wise to look forward to calamities unless we can be morally certain that there is some more solid foundation for a prediction than the excited phantasy of a highly emotional sensitive giving way to a disposition to cater to a popular love of the fright-inspiring.

A true prophet is a seer or seeress who possesses the penetrative insight that sees thru outward semblances and discerns what can never meet the casual eye. There is undoubtedly a fixed relation between cause and effects that can never be interfered with, and it is only thru fuller than ordinary acquaintance with this unchanging order that genuine prophecies can be made. There are distinctly two varieties of prophets, each genuine and valuable, classifiable under the following heads: (1) Prophets who are such by virtue of their own enlightened perceptiveness; (2) Prophetic mediums who are not prophets themselves but instruments thru which prophetic utterances can be given.

In the first of these categories we must place those

who deserve to be styled Adepts or Initiates. In the second rank we must place honest susceptible persons who receive and transmit information they are incapable of discovering at firsthand.

Modern philosophy is rapidly throwing off all materialistic incubi and addressing itself fearlessly and dispassionately to problems of Psychical Research. The obvious result of this excellent trend to philosophical study is to awaken public interest in the reality of a larger world than that discoverable by the unsupplemented findings of our five bodily senses as commonly restricted.

The Astral Realm is now a term becoming so familiar to general readers of literature bordering on the Theosophical or occult, that we are beginning to find a large public ready to appreciate references to this inner and larger realm of matter, for it is a material realm in the broader sense in which we may legitimately speak of matter, tho not in the foolishly narrow sense in which the word has long been ignorantly confined. The realm of thought and imagination is the kingdom of the spirit which creates forms in subtler matter before they can be translated into grosser matter, and thus fully "materialized" before objective carnal vision. A seer can behold a thought-form or mentoid as clearly as a person with ordinary physical sight can see an external object on the plane of physical ultimatum. Now, one kind of true prophecy, tho not the highest, is due to observation of what has already occurred on the astral plane, or is now occurring there, and will eventually be duplicated or represented in the field of grossest material activity. All growth is from within outward. Imagination is the formative faculty without which no inventor could devise a plan for future physical out-carrying. An inventor is in a very true sense a prophet, for he actually foresees and foretells what will subsequently be externalized, and his dreams come actually true. "The stuff that dreams are made of" needs further analysis and, as we proceed with our



analysis we frequently discover that dreams are often so prophetic that we have seen every detail of an event on the astral plane prior to its fulfillment on the physical. A misconception of the relation between the astral and physical realms has led to a fatalistic perversion of the idea of prophecy; it having often been taught that we are either slaves to blind necessity or else compelled to carry out the will of superior intelligences without our own volition, when in reality this stupendous false doctrine has been built upon a primal misconception regarding the priority of mental creations and the subsequent of physical results.

A prophet may clearly see that seed has already been sown in a plot of earth which gives no outward indications of such impregnation, therefore it looks as tho some blind necessity or arbitrary fate were working if a certain harvest springs up exactly when and where the seer predicated it would appear. But the intelligent prophet, or any thoughtful person familiar with a reasonable view of prophecy, knows that insight in that case, and accurate calculation from cause to effect, led to the prediction being fulfilled. On the mental plane, and in the field of all our spiritual activities, precisely the same rule holds good. If a certain cause inevitably leads onward to a certain effect, then it is for the prophet to tell what must be the outcome of cause already set in motion. Life, then, becomes far more rational and far more under our volitional control than tho we remained ignorant of this law of sequence. Prophets, far from being merely fortune tellers or prognosticators of future events, are exhorters unto righteousness and the most practical and useful of all our various groups of teachers. To the unthinking and unreasoning man or woman life is a game of chance or else a dire necessity at every turn. Health and sickness, joy and sorrow, success and failure, all seem to be portioned out to each one of us in such a manner that we can only take whatever comes and submit to

the inevitable. Stoicism is regarded by many persons today as the summit of philosophy, but it is far from being a superlative even when optimistic in its final implications.

The doctrine of Karma, now so much discussed, lends itself either to Fatalism or to an acceptance of the purer doctrine we will call Prophetism, according to the side from which it is approached. Prophets with their clear interior vision may be able to read much that is veiled from ordinary eyes, therefore they may be competent to assign causes for present effects which lie beyond all common ranges in vision. We may have come into the world with certain predispositions which we cannot help meeting, no matter how valiantly we may confront them, therefore they may constitute a portion of our now inevitable Karma. But a true prophetic ministry teaches us how to handle these limitations and seeming drawbacks in such a way as to transmute apparent curses into actual blessings, and this can never be done without combined resolution and knowledge. If a prophet speaks to the edification of the entire Church, then we can only be edified by making practical use of prophetic exhortations. It seems impossible to overrate the importance of the prophetic gift when once we regard it as an all-including ability to peer below all external surfaces and penetrate into the veritable arcanum of the immemorial Mysteries. The Mysteries are so often referred to in the various Epistles, and initiation into them was once so highly esteemed, that it seems incredible that the exterior church should have so utterly repudiated them as to have lost sight of their very existence except to the extent of having preserved some account of them as pertaining to abandoned usages peculiar to departed centuries.

The essential difference between priests and prophets is never difficult to comprehend, for the simple reason that a priesthood is always bound by the laws of its constitution to follow a prescribed

path alike in doctrine and in ritual. Prophetic ministries are apt to give great trouble to any conservative organization if they are exercised within any such enclosure, because no one can hold a prophet to established precedent, or compel a prophetic utterance to conform to any established order.

In the primitive Christian church the prophets held a position similar to that held by the Oracles in the pre-Christian centuries and tho' there were often unpleasant exhibitions of lawlessness among prophets who exercised no wise restraint over their emotions, in all cases where prophets were well balanced persons there was no confusion. There are in these days frequent outbursts of prophecy among bodies of people whose ecclesiastical organization is somewhat free and easy, and tho' many of the predictions made by seemingly irresponsible persons are not completely verified, there is almost always a substratum of verity to make it well worth while to examine the predictions with a view to sifting out, from much that may be termed alloy, the precious metal which inheres.

We could not obey the wise apostolic injunction, "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good," were we either to blindly accept or blindly reject the many words of doubtful testimony which are often brought to our eyes and ears, however we may be situated, and it is exactly at this point that we need to rid our minds completely of the insane delusion that because some prophecies are unfulfilled, therefore all coming thru the same channel must be equally foundationless.

Vision on the psychic plane, or in the astral realm, is usually imperfect, except in the case of seers, whose seership is phenomenally acute and whose general mode of life is conducive to the unfettered exercise of prophetic endowments. Mal-observation must never be confounded with wilful falsification, for it is an error that can be corrected by improved ways of living and by the practice of

complete consecration to an acceptable ministry. The oracles connected with the Greek temples, at a time when Greece was enjoying the full splendor of her highest achievements, devoted their lives entirely to their prophetic work during the period given over to this special ministry. Oracles were not consultable by every passerby who chose for a small monetary consideration to invade the privacy of the seer and have a "sitting" with the oracle. So carefully guarded were these super-sensitive youths and maidens, who were esteemed far more highly than it is customary to esteem exceptionally endowed individuals today, that it was considered a rare privilege to be permitted to interview any one of them. Modern societies for Psychical Research have endeavored to some considerable extent to follow this ancient usage, therefore when a sensitive has been selected for investigative persons she has been secluded from the general public and interviews with her have been impossible to obtain without a special passport from the officers of the society under whose auspices she has been operating. There is much to be said in favor of this seclusiveness, which appeals far more readily to the scientific than to the common mind, because all scientific explorers know how vitally essential to success along all lines of research are necessary conditions. But if one is only a superficial scientist aware of necessary physical conditions, but no more, the subtler aspects of necessary conditions are perforce unheeded. It is in the mental realm, in the field of thought and emotion, that conditions are far more important than on the simply physical plane of demonstration; consequently tho' all outward circumstances favor the best results, some inward perturbation often suffices to prevent any exhibition or lucidity on the part of a sensitive seeress whose interior condition must be peaceful in order that any picture can be successfully thrown upon the astral screen, which is the field of her psychic vision. Indistinct or con-

fused vision is the greatest drawback to prophetic lucidity regardless of whether the form of prophecy be thru vision or thru voice; for the voices heard and the objects perceived with the eye and ear of the inner body can only be corrected and detected and differentiated when the auric belt or atmosphere of the prophet is like unto "a sea of glass." We all know how painful and excited feelings cause a sense of flutter in the region of the solar plexus, which may spread thru the entire body and occasion severe distress in many directions if not quickly mastered. To the vision of a seer this physical disturbance is held as originating in an upset state of the auric envelope or belt which surrounds every one of us and which is a sort of photosphere in which the objects of the psychic realm can be reflected. Very often a prophet speaks of reading characters distinctly traced upon a "flying scroll," and it is by no means uncommon for sensitive persons to see words and shapes clearly outlined on the palimpsest of the atmosphere.

Why should it be thought unreasonable in these days of earnest and world-wide enquiry into psychic mysteries to plead for a School of the Prophets and to demand that opportunities be given for the development of a prophetic ministry to meet the loudly crying needs of these greatly agitated times? Training schools for ministers of religion, like schools for physicians and lawyers, furnish external information derivable from study of literature, sometimes coupled with physical experimentation; but the psychic faculty, without which there can be no qualification for the prophetic office, is not developed, but rather is it often repressed and stultified by collegiate exercises. University graduates are not as a rule, in any sense prophetic; they are apt to be intellectually rigid and confined within narrow conventionalized limits of mental action, incapacitated rather than assisted by their formal training to act as prophets. Apostolic succession is claimed



by the external Church as its perpetual heritage, but there is very little proof that the claim has any sure foundation, because the gifts of the Spirit which accompanied the apostles of old seem almost entirely absent in their alleged successors. "Even so persecuted they the Prophets (not priests) who were before you," is an eye-opening text usually read with closed eyelids. Sacerdotalism smothers prophecy; for that reason there is an outcry today against that oppressive externalism which has been the chief bane of institutionalized Christianity, certainly since the days of Constantine who secularized religion without spiritualizing the nations.

Judaism, and indeed all the great religious systems of the world, have been so deeply immersed in formalism that the voice of prophecy is rarely heard within any dignified temple walls. It is outside the temples and among the unchurched that the gifts of the Spirit today stand the best chance of ready heeding. No society or stilted organization of any kind proves a favorable field for prophetic ministries, because prophets can never be held within traces, and there is good reason why there should not be palings placed around their fiery ministry. Pioneers cannot be followers of conventions. Setters of new systems cannot be slaves to old customs, and it is pre-eminently the work of the prophet to blaze a fresh trail and lead a people out of bondage into a new and better pasture-field.

If prophets are not heard their utterances cannot be fairly judged, and tho' it is the height of folly to accept as infallibly accurate and authoritative all prophetic utterances, it is fair and reasonable whenever a spiritual gift shows itself in any person to allow that gift such freedom of expression that we may have the opportunity to derive from its unfettered exercise whatever it may be able to bestow for our enlightenment. Make no claims for the source whence information flows. Simply let the utterances flow and allow subsequent occur-



rances to prove how far the predictions have been justified. Such is the sane and sober rule to follow in regard to predictive utterances in general. Special manifestations of unusual character may, of course, call for special consideration, and particular cases may demand special treatment, but of these we cannot speak or write definitely in lessons intended only for general helpfulness.

## LESSON IX

### Mediumship and Moral Character

The ever recurring question of the relation between mediumship and moral character is one that cannot be disposed of anything like so easily as at first sight might appear. To quote the old adages, "Birds of a feather flock together" and "Like attracts like," is by no means to dispose of the inquiry satisfactorily, for tho' both those sayings contain a vast amount of general truth, they do not by any means answer the oft-repeated query as to why it is that very often a medium whose mediumship is unmistakably genuine in the main is addicted to immoral practices and is often a person whose general character is below rather than above an average standard of respectability.

By making this statement we do not intend to endorse the utterly false indictment sometimes brought against mediums as a distinctive class of persons, notorious for flagrant immoralities, for such they certainly are not. But tho' many mediums are persons of pure life and noble aspirations, it cannot be denied that others are very much the reverse, and it often happens that entirely satisfactory evidences of mediumship are furnished by the immoral as well as by the moral sensitive.

To consider this topic fairly, it is essential that we admit at the outset that mediumship is not necessarily a reward of virtue any more than it is a penalty of vice. A medium is often merely an unusually sensitive child, highly impressionable, who sees, hears and feels a great deal more than does the average child; therefore this particular child seems to belong in a class alone and is often grievously maltreated by ignorant adults and by other children who can only see queerness or oddity

in their singular associate. As such child grows up, this sensitiveness sometimes diminishes, but sometimes increases, and when it increases, if opportunity favors, its possessor becomes known as a medium and often enters upon a professional mediumship career. There is no more need for morality to induce this simply natural mediumship than to constitute some one a musician or a poet, and we know from history, and also from contemporary proof, that musicians and poets are not necessarily either highly moral or definitely immoral any more than a special degree of morality or immorality is connected with the possession of mechanical skill or oratorical ability. Natural sensitiveness and special characteristic endowments do not pertain to the domain of ethics, therefore it must follow that persons who view everything from a solely ethical viewpoint encounter much that bewilders and distresses them.

Sentimentalism is very prominent in many quarters, and much of it is so natural and proper that it must be treated with respect rather than with disdain. It is altogether natural for a son or daughter to feel reverence for a beloved and honored parent recently passed to spirit life, and it must entail a shock to sensitive feelings to be assured that a revered father or mother makes a communication to a child thru the instrumentality of a libertine, who may be at the time when the communication is made just recovering from a debauch, and it does not seem probable that such a channel of communication could be sought out by the parent in question seeking communion with son or daughter. But, reasonable tho this inference unquestionably is, there are two or more sides to this great question of mediumship, not merely the single thought of mutual congeniality between spirit and medium. It is not always that a spirit has large choice of mediumistic channels to select from, and as the spirit accompanies the person seeking communication to the house of the

medium in a majority of instances, and the medium, if a clairvoyant, often simply describes that spirit to the sitter, and if a clairvoyant hears and conveys a message, there is far less psychic association between spirit and medium in such cases than is superficially supposed.

It is not the medium, but the sitter in probably 99 instances out of an average 100 who attracts the spirit, and the claim is not frequently made that someone's particularly near and dear friends communicate thru a public medium, or even thru a private sensitive, except when the one to whom the message is to be delivered is present. It is the sitter rather than the medium who generally attracts the spirits, consequently the moral condition of the sitter is a more influential factor by far than that of the medium, who is frequently only in a position analogous to that of a telegraphic operator or any messenger who conveys tidings from one individual to another. A person desiring to send a telegram or cablegram, or to have a letter conveyed from one house to another, is not necessarily personally attracted to any available medium of communication, but gladly avails himself of any means at disposal for accomplishing the end desired; and any fee that may be paid to a transmitter has nothing to do with any sentiment felt for the individual who performs the service, except in occasional instances. We do not doubt that a great deal of affection and congeniality often exists between spirits and the medium thru whom they work, but such affection usually is between mediums and their particular guides and constantly attendant spirits, not between them and any influence which may seek for the moment to make use of their instrumentality for conveying a message to a friend not mutual.

Broadly speaking, moral character has a great deal to do with the grades of unseen associates one usually keeps in touch with, therefore if we are discussing the question of the general relation between

mediumship and morality, we can never regard it as unimportant to insist upon the highest possible moral standards, but we must avoid confounding one aspect of a general subject with another, for such confounding greatly embarrasses investigation and leads to many seriously bewildering misconceptions. When we leave the lower level of seemingly automatic mediumship and rise to contemplate spiritual associations voluntarily induced, the moral question looms large on our horizon and the mottoes quoted come into large requisition. Voluntary mediumship is determined very largely by one's aspirations, so much so that a person of chronically benevolent intent can never be made use of by unseen influences for mischief-making purposes, nor to advocate any form of treachery, cruelty or dishonesty, because in such cases the medium is surrounded by a wall of protecting aura which shuts out all influences of an unwelcome nature, while it opens the way for all such influx as comports with the established will of its generator. Simple lack of definitely established moral principle is far more common among sensitives than deliberate persistent immorality. That is why so many mediums are under such different influences at different times and in varying circumstances. From the days of the Fox Sisters (of 1848 celebrity) to the present hour, investigators of modern mediumship have confronted the serious problem of extreme sensitiveness rendering its possessor liable to be influenced by an immense variety of conflicting influences. Two of the Fox Sisters were extremely open to varying controls, while one of those remarkable girls seemed to possess throughout her earthly existence a much stronger individuality than either of her sisters.

Responsibility usually attaches far more to the consultant than to the medium when the former is a man or woman of decided individuality and the latter is a yielding sensitive, and when we take a circle into account, composed of a number of per-

sons, several of whom are often strongly marked individuals, the responsibility of what occurs is far more justly laid at the door of the investigators than at that of the medium.

Many a time alcoholic stimulants have been given to an exhausted sensitive who should have received very different treatment, and because he or she began to acquire a taste for liquor after having received it frequently at the hands of "moral and highly respectable" investigators and in their own well-appointed homes and soon commenced to indulge promiscuously in that downward direction, the public, including the chief culprits, were loud in denunciation of the "vulgar, drunken, immoral medium."

The greater responsibility must always be higher up" rather than "lower down," and we maintain stoutly that a very large share of blame attaches to sitters which has been mercilessly hurled at mediums. The average investigator is neither a saint nor a hero, and while there are many honest, pure-minded consultors of mediums who may suffer in some degree from the previous demoralization of the sensitive they consult, in a wider sense it must be realized that the public gets in large measure whatever it demands. There is always a supply to meet an imperative and persistent demand, and no demand is louder or more perpetual than for information thru mediumistic channels pertaining to affairs which are not conducted by any means in accordance with the rules of strict morality.

"Keep away from mediums," is the stupid cry of the timorous and narrow-minded. "When you consult a medium take with you a pure intention and keep a level head," is good practical common sense advice. Whatever may be the pros and cons of some particular controverted case, it is now freely admitted by fair-minded investigators that all phases of mediumship are largely affected by the psychic atmosphere furnished by enquirers. There are a few highly positive individuals who are mediums,



willingly and gladly, who are not highly influenceable by miscellaneous surroundings, but they are the exceptions rather than the rule. William Thomas Stead was a famous example of voluntary mediumship, but he was in a very different position from that occupied by the medium who earns a living by receiving clients perpetually.

Tho the word, morals, is one of seemingly doubtful meaning, it should not be forgotten that one of the older meanings of the word, derived from the Latin **morales**, simply signifies **manners**, therefore much, that is considered moral at one time or in one country, is considered immoral at some other time or in some other locality.

We are often rash and unduly harsh in insisting upon conventional standards of alleged morality, which may not be able to stand the test of impartial judgment. A double standard of conduct, attempting to justify all manner of indiscretions in one sex which society refuses to tolerate in the other, may have no justification in a higher court of appeal than some average earthly tribunal where established precedent and musty tradition rule all decisions. Can the average man or woman be entirely sure that the accepted moral sanction of his particular nation or party are adjudged accurate in the spiritual world, where motive or intention must count for far more than mere conformity with arbitrary man-made standards?

Another point to be considered is the great diversity of opinion that exists in spirit-life, in the spheres adjoining the earth at least, concerning matters which are in constant dispute among incarnate legislators. When it is remembered that the average medium has no directly intimate or conscious contact with influences beyond the states which interpenetrate our earthly atmosphere we need not wonder that no special holiness is required on the part of a sensitive who acts as an intermediary between friends in and out of the flesh who are all living, as you, on a very ordinary plane of mental and moral development.

## LESSON IX (Continued)

### MEDIUMSHIP AND MORAL CHARACTER

Business mediumship is very popular, for we all know how largely sought after are these clairvoyants and others who make a specialty of dealing with purely mundane matters. It may not be generally wise to seek counsel of the spirit-world in ordinary business transactions, but we know how numerous are the applicants for this sort of information, and it stands to reason that judging by the questions asked and the information given, the moral tone of the questioner and of the communicating intelligences is neither higher nor lower than that commonly prevailing in commercial circles. There is an ordinary business morality neither very high nor very low, which can be carried over into the earthbound sphere of the spirit-world in which multitudes of the undeparted (miscalled departed) are still living, and it is from these unprogressed, undeveloped influences that the great bulk of simply business messages are received.

Viewing this question sanely and soberly, without partiality of any sort, we reach the inevitable conclusion that physical disbodiment can never transform character. It has been said repeatedly by thoughtful preachers in various churches that we have no warrant for supposing that the average individual a few days or weeks after quitting the mortal frame is, in character, any different from what he was previously, and we all know that usually persons of fixed habits have an established moral code centered in their inner consciousness from which they never wish to deviate. This inner conviction regarding right and wrong differs very largely with different individuals who may be living side by side and whose outward conduct appears all of a piece.

In spirit-life there is no immediate change of disposition, or even of belief, but there is usually a great and speedy throwing off of any mask or disguise that may have been worn on earth. It is on that account that so many people believe persistently that death transforms character when it only removes a veil which formerly concealed character. We are by no means discountenancing legitimate business mediumship, for we have no sympathy whatever with the sanctimonious absurdity that leads people to refer to all business affairs as tho they were necessarily either positively dishonorable, or at the very best conducted on too low a moral plane to render it permissible for us to ask the assistance of our spirit-friends in the conduct of worldly affairs. There are indeed two sides to this great question, and while one side seemingly exalts our idea of our friends who have "crossed the border," the other side suggests so degrading a view of necessary business as to discourage young persons embarking on a commercial career from setting before themselves a high or even a decent moral standard.

Morality ought not to be regarded as an exotic, a sort of rare blossom like an orchid in the floral kingdom that can only bloom in very exceptional conditions. Good morals should become a practical every-day asset, and instead of business being immoral and demoralizing it should be so conducted as to reflect credit upon all who engage in it.

Tho we admit, and indeed declare, that there are hosts of unseen influences of undeveloped, and even of perverted, moral tone with whom we can communicate if we so desire, and these respond to all desires to pervert mediumship to the fulfillment of some unrighteous end, we nevertheless most positively insist that when business questions are asked in a right spirit by sincere people they can and do enlist the attention of unseen helpers. It is often sentimentally objected that we should not disturb the rest

of the departed, as tho the simple fact of laying aside a material garment introduced its former wearer into a state of profound repose or entitled him to some special reward. All these vain misleading superstitions need to be dismissed from our minds before we embark on the ocean of psychical research, together with all foolish suppositions regarding the special sanctity or awful depravity of the entities we encounter on the astral plane. It is becoming more and more fully demonstrated that a vast amount of spirit-communion is simply telepathy or mental telegraphy extended onto the post-mortem plane, therefore we are frequently functioning here and now psychically as we shall continue to function after we have laid aside our flesh.

Moral purposes certainly have much to do with regulating the class of influences with which we most intimately commune, but no more so when it comes to what is definitely designated mediumship than when we are handling the topic of voluntary associations in ordinary mundane ways. Between **association** and **consociation** there is a wide difference which we need to study deeply before we can solve the mediumistic problem. We associate perforce with many people in every-day life with whom we never feel inwardly acquainted, while we are spiritually consociated with many whom we rarely if ever meet in any externally associative manner. Tho' these widely separated words, association and consociation are seldom clearly defined, except by students of Swedenborg who never confound them, it is highly important that we interpret them to refer respectively to outward mingling brought about by the conditions of the social and business world (associations) and to those deep-seated feelings we instinctively entertain for those who are truly our spiritual kinsfolk, even tho outward circumstances rarely, if ever, throw us physically together (consociations). Swedenborg suggested the entire philosophy of psychic intercourse in the following

famous sentence of only six words, "Thought gives presence; Love gives conjunction." Whatever we think about is in our mental presence, but only that which enlists our affections is in any vital way united with us. That is why it is that we often find it next to impossible to get into communication with certain individuals whom we saw a great deal constantly while they were on earth, while we are often made aware of the close and continued fellowship of some whose names convey no meaning to us, for we never knew them in any external manner. Mediumistic persons who are not under the necessity of making their living by their mediumship have much more freedom to choose their unseen associates than have those sensitives who are obliged to interview all callers. We admit that professional mediumship is legitimate, but it usually imposes many hardships on the medium, particularly if he or she is extremely sensitive. When one's work only calls for public ministrations the case is simpler, because descriptions can be given and communications read from the atmosphere by a keen sensitive without involving anything like "control," which is usually dangerous in miscellaneous circumstances. It is not possible for a thoroughly well fortified sensitive to be invaded by immoral influences, because there are no points of contact, but there is usually some weak place in one's moral armor and it is thru that aperture that undesirable influx enters.

The desire to please a client is often dangerous, because a mere desire to please is not entirely conscientious. Persons often derive great momentary pleasure from insincere flattery and from hearing what they like to hear whether it is true or false. Owing to this lack of sufficiently high moral principle a great many misleading statements are made, emanating from several sources contemporaneously. The desire of the sitter often assumes form on the astral atmosphere and indeed becomes an en-souled mentoid (thought-form) which a clairvoy-



ant can plainly see and accurately describe. These thought-forms are often mistaken for visions of a more spiritual character and many persons gladly accept a description of these as veritable messages from spirit-friends. Then we often receive communications imperfectly, and there is a widespread tendency among imperfectly developed sensitives to guess on the basis of the little that is actually revealed. We must not overlook the patent fact that mediumistic persons are as a rule only ordinarily human, and we cannot rightfully expect from them a grade of moral excellence much higher than we are ready to supply. For too little thought and attention are given to the subtler aspects of the moral question, which included all that relates to interior affection and aspiration.

Conventional morality is usually so utterly external a consideration that it relates almost exclusively to words and acts, sometimes sincere and sometimes hypocritical, but outwardly the same whether inwardly sincere or insincere. In the psychic realm words are often unheard and actions unperceived but purposes and intentions are clearly visible, and these are considered the morals of the spiritual estate. If love is the universally attractive force, and congeniality of desire and sentiment form the abiding bases of spiritual inter-relatedness, how can we suppose that mere outward conformity to any set of social or other rules can be regarded in spirit-life as constituting morality?

Wherever rules are observed from conscientious motives, such obedience possesses moral character and evinces some real spiritual development; and on the other hand equally where certain social conventions are ignored because the ignorers believe them to be detrimental to human welfare, a higher moral standard is inwardly attained than where hypocrisy is practised. There can be no virtue in double-dealing or in secretly entertaining ideas and affections which we dare not outwardly express, for



fear of offending "Mrs. Grundy." If we admit a spiritual basis of morality, we must agree that much that passes for moral conduct in earthly society cannot possibly pass muster in any spiritual realm. Tho it is never safe or honorable to glorify or to advocate transgression of moral codes established and maintained with a general view to the safeguarding of society, when we are dealing with psychic problems we are compelled to peer far below the level of surface morals and search for the instincts underlying words and actions. None of us are perfectly free from faults, therefore charity rather than censure should be our aim when endeavoring to estimate the moral worth of others. Kindly thoughts, pure desires, benevolent intentions are certain links to bind us closely in indissoluble union with those celestial companies in whose society and under whose guidance mediumship must ever prove a blessing, not a bane.

## LESSON X.

### **Types and Varieties in Mediumship—What Determines this Variety**

The question is frequently asked by students of the problem of variety in mediumship: What is it that determines and regulates this variety?

To answer this enquiry in anything like a satisfactory manner, one must take into account in the first place the simple fact of Temperament, and though a study of differing temperaments may never suffice to completely explain all we have to consider, it will assuredly go a long way in the desired direction.

Mediumship has been for many years roughly divided into certain easily definable categories, of which the two largest are Mental and Physical. By mental mediumship is generally meant all those phases, such as clairvoyance, inspirational oratory, and all that does not involve the movement of material articles without perceptible physical contact, or the employment of definitely material agents such as trumpets, for example, in the production of phenomena. Between these two easily definable types of mediumship there are many grades of semi-mental and semi-physical, such as automatic writing and much else that gives evidence of a joint employment of mental faculties and physical faculties.

It was long considered probable, if not certain, that a physical medium possessed an organism that lent itself readily to quick depletion and equally rapid recuperation, and many of the best verified experiments of leading scientists who have investigated physical manifestations have gone far to justify this assertion. Famous physical mediums of a departed generation, such as Daniel Douglas Home, Henry Slade, and others who gained world-wide

celebrity and notoriety, were persons of powerful physique and of unusual mental temperament. They were, in many respects, very curious individuals, standing in an eccentric class by themselves, differing in some respects so widely from the general run of humanity as to appear often uncanny, therefore they called forth both admiration and hostility, they were loudly extolled and fiercely condemned, pronounced great benefactors of the race and also called frauds, impostors and everything else despicable and criminal. Now, it seems strange that such diametrically opposite views could have been taken by different persons of high intelligence after they had all interviewed and examined the claims of these marvelous physical mediums; but though much allowance must be made for prejudice and misrepresentation, amounting often to persecution, from which these peculiar persons often suffered bitterly, it must also be allowed that their upholders were not always entirely in the right nor were their denouncers always completely in the wrong.

We need not wonder that eccentricity of temperament and disposition characterizes a person thru whose agency the most uncommon phenomena occur; it would indeed be much stranger were it otherwise, for we might reasonably ask: How could a person be remarkably endowed with some rare ability, outwardly manifested thru a physical organism without possessing an organism in many ways differing from the accepted ordinary varieties?

Physical mediums have always been sensational as well as sensitive persons, and their conduct has often been exceedingly erratic, so much so as to cause all but purely scientific investigators to look with extreme disapproval upon much of their behaviour.

To the coldly dispassionate scientific observer every peculiarity is interesting as it affords a fresh opportunity for scientific research, but the strictly scientific cast of mind is rare, though extremely val-

uable, and all the more valuable, relatively speaking, on account of its rarity.

Many excellent treatises are extant setting forth the results of unimpassioned scientific research carried forward by Sir William Crookes, Professor Alfred Russel Wallace, and other highly distinguished scientists, during the 70's of the 19th century, and to those earlier works new testimonies of great value are being added by Sir Oliver Lodge and other eminent contemporary investigators.

In bygone days mediumship was much more to the front than it is at present, and the complaint has often been made that Home, Slade, Eglinton, and other marvelous physical mediums of the last century have had no adequate successors. There was a time when Materialization was so much in evidence and so widely discussed that a great many fraudulent persons simulated mediumship and many mediums were convicted of intermingling fraud with genuine phenomena. As these disagreeable occurrences are necessarily embarrassing and call forth popular indignation, it is not to be wondered at that physical mediumship passed under a heavy cloud and has been much discountenanced in many quarters, among professed Spiritualists as well as among outsiders; indeed Spiritualists have often been fiercer and more relentless in their attacks upon phenomena considered fraudulent than have any others except the most bitter opponents of mediumship in general among the public at large. It seems impossible to entirely eliminate fraud from mediumship so long as it prevails in the world at large, for mediums are among the most sensitive and impressionable of human beings, and when not endowed with an exceptionally high sense of honor they are more likely to succumb to surrounding influences, good, bad and indifferent, than are persons less exceptional. Physical mediumship has no necessary connection with good moral character or with the lack of it, for it results chiefly from a loosely constructed physical organism, from which a large

amount of vital pabulum can be readily withdrawn and quickly replaced with much less difficulty than is ordinarily the case. The rigid experiments conducted by scientific examiners of the most startling physical phenomena have proved conclusively that the weight of a medium's body has been greatly reduced during the progress of a seance and restored to its usual amount very quickly after the phenomena had ceased. Sitters have also been heavily drawn upon in many instances to supply additional material for the production of phenomena; all going to prove that the unseen operating intelligences were making use of physical material gathered primarily from the medium and in lesser degree from others who were assisting at the seance. A physical medium who can supply this pabulum is a very interesting person from the scientific standpoint, and the fact of his being a curious individual in many ways does not in the least detract from his importance, seeing that it would be ridiculous to set him up on a moral pedestal and pronounce him a singularly holy person, when no such claim is made for him or by him.

There is a vast amount of sentimental cant floating about concerning the purity of life necessary to constitute one a good medium. With all due deference to moral character, which is of illimitable value from a truly spiritual standpoint, we must not drop into fanaticism and confound issues that widely differ. A good tailor is not necessarily a moral man, tho it is highly desirable that all tradesmen should be upright in all their dealings. The tailor's art is something apart from morality; it is a product of mechanical skill. Some children would easily make good tailors, while others would not, though all may be equal in respect of moral character. Now, when a physical phenomenon is produced, the intelligence behind the scenes has to employ material to weave into a temporary garment, because no spiritual entity without a physical body can exhibit its powers in a physical manner without recourse to appropriate

material, and this must be supplied on the physical plane.

Now, just as there are scientific minds on earth specially devoted to proving facts scientifically, and these demonstrators are only desirous of obtaining the means for prosecuting their researches to a successful issue, so on the unseen planes there are many intelligences bent on demonstrating phenomena which shall conclusively prove the facts they are determining to make manifest. A physical medium may be (but need not be) coarse and illiterate and addicted to many undesirable habits and still prove useful for the purposes for which his temperament peculiarly adapts him. Such a person only needs to be understood to be appraised at his true value, which from the scientific viewpoint is very great.

In such a case it usually happens that the investigators have much more to do with the morale of the situation than has the medium, for they frequently serve as magnets to attract the manifesting entities, and it is according to their aspirations that they draw responses out of the unseen universe. Suspicion is the relentless foe of dispassionate investigation; a suspicious person is never a clear-eyed, but is rather a blear-eyed investigator. Perfect mental serenity, coupled with acute observation faculty, trained thru practised concentration solely upon one object at a time, contributes most of all to qualification for adequate investigation of phenomena. Nothing is more important than that a highly sensitive medium should be kept in an unruffled condition, for disturbances in the medium's atmosphere or auric zone are extremely detrimental to the production of convincing phenomena.

For physical manifestations, passivity on the part of medium and sitters is alike necessity, but this passivity can be as voluntary as any phase of activity, for we can all learn to make ourselves active and passive in self-regulated alteration of mental attitudes.

The best time for sitting for physical manifesta-



tions is usually after sunset, and when no business or other engagements press, and the best place is wherever the atmospheric conditions are reposeful and the general air is as free from contamination as possible. Good ventilation is essential to the health of all concerned. Much of the exhaustion following a seance is often due to a stifling atmosphere brought about by stupid non-observance of rudimentary sanitary conditions, and then falsely attributed to the effects of mediumship. If people would only attend more rationally to proper ventilation, hygienic dress and simple food, they would be able to exercise mediumship and attend seances with far less inconvenience and suffering than they now often experience.

A physical medium, upon whose constitution heavy draughts are often made, can readily recuperate without injury to mind or body provided mediumship is exercised only in wholesome surroundings. Such a person requires much free exercise in the open air and usually thrives far better in the country than in a city. A country estate is far healthier than a city flat for everyone, and if a society engaged in scientific psychical research takes a medium under its wing, it would be well for such a body to provide a retreat away from city strife where the medium could enjoy mental and physical relaxation, whether the seances were held there or elsewhere. It greatly contributes to facile production of phenomena to set apart certain rooms exclusively for psychical work, as an atmosphere becomes gradually charged with elements which can be readily utilized in the production of phenomena. Garments also can profitably be kept sacred for use only during the progress of seances.

Turning now to Mental Mediumship we are confronted with a type of temperament altogether different from the physical. As the physical medium is principally called upon to supply material for external phenomena, the mental medium is called upon to retire into an interior condition in which he is

removed to an unusual distance from the physical plane. Very often a mental medium of rare excellence is a person of spare frame and of almost ascetic tendencies, generating less than the ordinary amount of physical vitality, but enjoying good health tho by no means adapted to hard manual labor. Many a physical medium makes an excellent tiller of the soil, and delights in physical occupation of various kinds, but cares little for art and literature. A good mental medium is apt to be studious and artistic, far better adapted to literary employment than to manual efforts. Such a person is often highly sensitive to mental states and is much more readily affected by psychical than by physical conditions. We may have to pay much attention to externals with persons of this type in so far as they are expressive of internal conditions, but no further. It is the mental attitude of the persons with whom this type of medium is brought in contact that signifies far more than observance of any outward rules. Here again we often encounter eccentricity, but it is on the mental plane and very apt to manifest in the expression of unusual views of life such as would furnish material for an original play or novel.

Inspirational speakers, to whose utterances an immense amount of attention was given at the very time physical phenomena was being closely investigated in many lands contemporaneously, were usually somewhat uneven in their utterances, their finest orations being given when audiences furnished them with some exceptional stimulus. Sometimes this stimulus is of the most friendly and sympathetic order, but on other occasions it is a wave of challenging antagonism that will call forth superfine deliverances. During recent years Spiritualism has become too general and popular, and its accustomed methods of propaganda too commonplace to evoke very startling results, for the best mediumistic demonstrations require a certain definite stimulation which is only occasionally afforded.

Henry Ward Beecher was wont to say that a great

oration required a great occasion, a great inspiration, and a great subject in addition to a great orator, therefore unless the four essentials were present it was not forthcoming. No doubt Beecher was fundamentally right, but judging from results among inspired speakers we must acknowledge that some, if not all of these four essentials, are often furnished on the unseen rather than on the physical side working thru the medial instrumentality of a sensitive who in his or her ordinary condition is no orator whatever, tho no doubt in possession of latent oratorical ability; for it appears, as a result of close and continuous investigation, that dormant faculties are worked upon by inspiring intelligences, who cannot create faculties in a mediumistic person, but can and do arouse and employ to the fullest possible extent such faculties as they find potential.

A great audience may be composed of only three or four persons, because greatness in the mental sense does not imply a vast concourse of dull intellects which may easily be massed together at a circus. A single bright mind, alert and sympathetic in an audience of any dimensions, may suffice to afford the necessary conditions for the delivery of a masterly inspired oration on a public platform, precisely as the same helpful man or woman of keen intellect and kindly disposition may call out the most amazing results during a private interview with a delicately organized sensitive.

Professing Spiritualists are not always the people who furnish the best conditions for the exercise of any phase of mediumship, for they are often coldly unsympathetic and harshly critical, while many inexperienced investigators are in so receptive a mental state that they aid a medium immensely. Particular phases of mediumship usually follow the bent of the medium's natural disposition pretty closely, thus it comes to pass that a lover of music will be inspired to sing or play; a lover of literature will be inspired to write; a lover of painting or sculpture will be inspired to produce a painting or a bust; a

child or adult of inventive turn of mind will be inspired to produce some invention. We must remember that the intelligences who work with and thru mediums are largely limited as to their expression by the instruments they have at their disposal.

No musician, however gifted, can evolve the tones peculiar to a cornet by drawing a bow across the strings of a violin, nor can the finest pianist draw from a pipe organ the same kind of tone resulting from passing his fingers over the keyboard of a piano; neither is it possible for any organist to transcend the capacity of the instrument upon which he plays. Organs have just so many stops, pedals and keyboards and no more; violins have so many string; pianos just so many octaves. So is it with mediumistic capacities at any given time with reference to any special medium. But human faculties can be increased by exercise, therefore the limit of to-day is not necessarily that of to-morrow.

The cultivation of mediumship does not imply change of type or alteration of characteristic temperament, but continued unfolding more and more of latent capacity. We can never countenance, much less advocate any objectionable artificial methods for arousing sensitiveness, such as the employment of stimulants or narcotics, which are invariably injurious. Healthy modes of living, free from all manner of excess, must ever be recommended to those who wish to exercise mediumship healthfully and reliably. Blind yielding to unknown influences is always fraught with risk, but intuition must be our chief guide in all directions.

Unseen influences may call themselves by any names they choose to assume, and if we blindly accept what we are told regardless of sensations accompanying and results following, we may be swindled in many directions by arrogant impostors either seen or unseen. There is a sphere surrounding every individual that cannot be altered except from within, therefore a deceiver cannot emanate the same psychic influence as one whose intentions are

honest. The emanation from one who delights in cruelty cannot be the same as that proceeding from one who delights in kindness, and so it goes illimitably.

Sensitive children, in common with all highly sagacious animals, know whom to trust and whom not to trust, and as the childlike disposition is essentially mediumistic in the best meaning of the word, it is well for most adults who are practising as mediums to let their intuitions guide them far more than they usually have done or are now doing.

If a person enters the atmosphere of a sensitive, demanding an interview and the sensitive feels repelled, it would be wise not to give a sitting. No one need be rude or condemnatory in the attitude taken, but discretion should be heeded. Very often certain persons coming closely together clash psychically and the interblending of their auric emanations produces a discord. This is no proof that there is anything wrong or bad in either party, it only goes to show lack of mutual adaptability, and often the direct contradiction of adaptation. After all the advice that can be proclaimed and published along general lines has been given and heeded, there will ever remain the need for individual discretion in the exercise of mediumship, and as sensitive persons outgrow more and more the old mistaken idea that they must be in a chronic state of prostrate passivity in order to be successful mediums, the rightful assertion of individuality will increasingly reveal the welcome fact that the highest and most convincing types of mediumship traverse the road of temperamental inclination, so that the most useful mediumship is of supplemental, not of substitutionary character. Inspiration of the noblest sort augments, it never subverts any rightful natural tendencies, and it ever increases natural talent whenever it is healthfully encouraged.



## LESSON XI

### Mediumship and Adepthood

Having discussed various phases of mediumship and made some endeavor to explain, at least in outline, whence mediumistic faculties proceed and how they may be reasonably cultivated and profitably exercised, we now desire to direct attention to Adepthood which occupies a position in general esteem (and rightly so), far higher than any usually assigned to simple mediumship. The reason for assigning a position of great importance to Adepthood and regarding Mediumship as occupying a more primitive ground, is because many a medium is such from organization only, and therefore practically from necessity, while no one can possibly become an adept without a large amount of deliberate self-development.

When the famous electrician, Thomas Edison, was questioned as to how far he thought that his phenomenally successful work was legitimately attributable to inspiration, he replied more seriously than facetiously, that he considered that Perspiration played a larger part than Inspiration in his accomplishments. On first hearing so strange an utterance one might imagine that the famous inventor was casting a slur upon inspiration, but such was by no means necessarily the case, for the original meaning and true etymological significance of perspiration is breathing thru, while inspiration obviously signifies breathing in. Spiro, I breathe; and spirare, to breathe, are the Latin founts whence our English words, inspiration, perspiration, aspiration, respiration and expiration are derived, therefore as the prefix per stands for thru, perspire is to breathe thru, not as commonly supposed simply to sweat. In all ordinary uses of the word in these days we



are led to suppose that sweating and perspiring means about the same, when in reality these two processes are widely dissimilar. We all know how persons whose breathing is seriously impeded, and who are in a generally weak and run down condition, often suffer from night sweats and the water flows out of their pores excessively and unpleasantly whenever they take a little more than their common small degree of exercise. In sound health the human body is comfortably moist but not uncomfortably wet, but when abnormal or pathological conditions obtain, normal breathing is interfered with and thru clogging of the pores disagreeable sweating is substituted for agreeable breathing. All Yoga practices deal primarily with regulated modes of breathing, because there is no self-command where there is no regulated breath, and where there is lack of self-control or self-directed energy there can be no attainment of adepthood. We often call a man or woman an adept who has achieved something unusual along some particular line of mental industry by dint of patient, persistent perseverance, which is something widely different from easy dependence upon natural gifts and endowments alone, which, tho' forming in most instances a necessary background and starting point for deliberate endeavor, can never be rightly looked upon as substitutes for resolute determination to make something of oneself.

We hear so much of "selfmade" men and women, pro and con, that we need to carefully weigh arguments and assertions on both sides of an age-long controversy. On the one hand we are confronted with assertions to the effect that Heredity and Environment are responsible for nearly everything, on the other hand we are told that all truly great individuals have made themselves illustrious by their own determined endeavors. It is safe to aver that there is some measure of truth in each of these diametrically opposite assertions, experience manifest-

ly teaching that the qualities inherent in us and the opportunities thrown in our way have much to do oftentimes with our success when we succeed. But it should never be forgotten that there are many obvious failures in the face of great inducements to success, and many remarkable successes in the face of tremendous obstacles which only the most heroic courage and perseverance could have surmounted. When Longfellow gave us those heroic lines in the Psalm of Life, "Lives of great men all remind us we may make our lives sublime," he struck the keynote to an anthem of human possibility far beyond the realization of average men and women; but it is well that children everywhere should be taught to recite and sing words of such majestic import, for they are fundamentally sound as well as intensely bracing.

We have probably in the course of our investigations met certain mediumistic persons, who may be thoroughly honest and doing a limited amount of good work faithfully who have, by all report, made no progress during 20, 30, or even 40 years. They seem to have come to a standstill; they move in a rut or travel in a groove round and round, but apparently take no steps forward. These honest psychics may be all they claim to be and their guides on the unseen side of life may be sincere and trustworthy, but painfully limited in knowledge and lacking in the spirit of adventure. Mediumship of the sort possessed and exercised by persons of this stamp is by no means hurtful or dangerous, but it is surely not extremely profitable, and owing to its negative and stationery character it justifies the complaint made by many progressive-minded investigators that such a kind of intercourse with the spirit-world fails to add sufficiently to our knowledge or to the elevation of our daily interest in it. It is from this cause more than from any other that many investigators have turned away from commonplace mediumship to a study of "occult," "theosophical"

and "new thought" literature and thereby caused lamentation in the ranks of ultra-conservative Spiritualists who protest against the defection from their ranks of persons who have failed to receive edification thru such mediumship channels as were open to them. It is extremely wise for convinced and enthusiastic Spiritualists to do their utmost to cultivate and exercise a kind of mediumship which will bring real satisfaction to intelligent enquirers. There is no necessary opposition of mediumship to adepthood, tho' the method of becoming an adept is one of voluntary affiliation with certain sources of information in place of relying upon whatever may come out of the unseen if one takes and holds a simply passive mental and physical attitude. It certainly ought not to be difficult to realize that the law of affinity works universally and regulates all psychical relationships to a far greater extent than it seemingly determines material conditions.

The old proverbial references to like attracting like and birds of a feather flocking together are completely applicable to what is constantly taking place on the psychic side of our experiences both when we are awake and when we are asleep, and even more when we are sleeping than during our waking periods. "Never walking heavenward can we walk alone" is a true saying, and it is furthermore true that we can never walk alone in any direction, for we attract spiritual companions at all times in consequence of what Swedenberg has termed our "dominant affection." To the merely shiftless in mind the idea of a dominant affection may mean very little indeed, but to all who set some definite goal before them it means immensely much. We can all yield irresolutely or waveringly to whatever influences may be in the ascendant, and that is exactly what fickle-minded people are continually doing. The true adept, and all on the path to adepthood, realize a goal ahead and resolutely strive to

reach it, not doubtfully and anxiously but firmly and steadfastly.

Concentration on the selected goal is the first matter of supreme importance, and we all know that concentration only means close and undivided interest. To concentrate upon what we greatly admire and truly love is never difficult but always extremely easy; difficulty arises immediately we seek to pay close attention to something in which we take but very little interest. Lack of concentration advertises lack of interest, and where little interest is taken in any pursuit definitely the goal of adepthood is an unattainable ideal. But we can scarcely imagine anyone seriously faring forth upon the way of initiation whose interest was at a low ebb or a vacillating quantity, unless the prompting motives were merely personal glorification or some financial gain, in which case it would not be desirable to seek to cultivate the inner faculties nor would it be possible to do so to any large extent. A vast amount of mischievous misapprehension prevails concerning the relative strength of the righthand and lefthand initiates, to employ current occult phraseology. It is erroneously taught in many places that the powers of darkness are almost if not quite as strong as the powers of light, but such an opinion is happily entirely fallacious. In such curiously instructive works as "High Magic" by Eliphas Levi, and the rarer works of Cornelius Agrippa and other medieval alchemists, we are distinctly shown how very limited is the ability of the lower occult forces who are sometimes referred to as Brethren of the Shadow. Strength on the spiritual side of life is commensurate with development of righteous intention, therefore it is ever true, both mystically and literally, that Parsifal can defeat Klingsor, but Klingsor strives in vain to subdue Parsifal. In that wonderfully beautiful legend which forms the motif of Richard Wagner's sublimest opera and which afforded Alfred Tennyson material for "The Idyl of the King" (Arthur) we have

set before us with unmistakable clearness the path of adepthood or the true way of initiation into the Greater Mysteries. At first Parsifal is represented as only a well-disposed lad who acts as other youths of his place and period, for he goes forth with bow and arrow and brings down a bird. Then Gurnemanz accosts him and rebukes him with seemingly undue severity for so commonplace an act, but in his harsh reprimand we are introduced to the true spirit of initiation. "Faint heart never wins fair lady."

To become a knight of the Holy Grail one must rise far above the ordinary standards of popular society and immeasurably transcend the mediocre standards of conventional morality. In the name of reason it may well be asked how can anyone expect to attain unusual powers or mount to unusual heights without undergoing unusual discipline and refraining from prevailing indiscretion? Here we confront the theological distinction between commandments binding upon all respectable members of ordinary society and "counsels of perfection" binding only upon such as set forth upon the saintly pathway which is the narrow road that only few attempt to tread. A saint is not properly a person unsuited to perform ordinary duties in the world, but one who has attained to a state where he can do far more than the ordinary and help humanity in many extraordinary ways. The question of sanctity is closely allied with sanity and the two words look alike and sound alike and are indeed derived from a common root, *Sanitas* (health). To be healthy is to be whole and to be whole is to be saintly. Abnormality is very far from sanctity, but supernormality, using the term as it is now often employed, is inseparable therefrom. The cultivation and exercise of our supernormal faculties at our own discretion marks a degree of self-direction definitely phenomenal. We are told of "held breath" and of much else that strikes the average reader as somewhat dangerous, in works professing to give directions for



attaining unusual heights of spiritual development, and it is not safe for untrained and undisciplined persons to experiment with curious Oriental practices not well understood in Europe or America and often adapted to India and its native populations, but not to the average native of any portion of the Occidental world. Simple breathing exercises may be profitably practised by every normal-minded person, but it should be steadily borne in mind that it is far more the resolute control over our sense-organs gained and maintained by such exercises than the simple performance of prescribed acts that accomplishes initiation.

If you determine to breathe regularly and rhythmically according to a system you believe to be beneficial, you thereby develop ability to govern your sense-impulses when you succeed in regulating your breath. Should you adopt fantastic methods they might work injury, but if the methods are rational nothing but benefit can accrue. Here we see how immensely important is the mental attitude, far transcending the physical behavior, for it is the former which dictates and governs the latter. Mechanical bodily exercises such as are practiced in an ordinary gymnasium cannot unfold spiritual qualities, but in so far as they are healthful in themselves they prove of some assistance by way of bringing the physique into suitable conditions as an instrument for the soul's employment. We certainly do not find athletes and gymnasts as a class exceptionally enlightened spiritually unless they have devoted thought to higher proficiency than that which will enable them to exhibit their muscles to admiring spectators; nevertheless to the extent that they are healthier than a majority of those who gaze upon their achievements they are so much nearer the goal of adepthood, and were they to determine to develop their inner faculties they would at once find their athletic training standing them in good stead.

We all know that abstinence and self-control are



absolutely essential to mental and physical proficiency, and what is self-control when we definitely analyze it but successful resistance to pressure from the lower side of existence both in seen and in unseen realms? In order to become self-regulating, we must withstand all manner of overt and subtle solicitations to do as others do and to gratify our own lower impulses when higher impulses are urging us in some contrary direction. It is not gratification of the senses which is in itself the cause of human failure to achieve nobility, but disregard of higher invitations which urge in a supersensuous direction. The adept is the man or woman who takes up the mystical serpent of temptation and thereby transmutes lower into higher energy. This is the mystery of transubstantiation, the **magnum opus** of alchemy, the true transmutation of baser metals into mystical gold within the human alembic. No medium who simply allows himself to be used by guiding intelligences is an adept, because his attitude is one that calls for no exercise of individual sovereignty, without which there can be no achievement of real victory over the raw material out of which the new statue is to be wrought by the spiritual sculptor.

We usually speak very glibly of the sacrifices made and the victories won by those highly advanced intelligences who have conquered limitations, and become Masters or Mahatmas (greatly unfolded souls) but how are we ever to advance likewise without making similar effort ourselves? When people use their reason on all these matters and refuse resolutely to be swayed by floating will-o'-the-wisp doctrines concerning mediumship and its alleged dangers, they will soon see how perfectly comprehensible is a rational and edifying view of this entire mighty subject. As we grow more and more highly individualized we become less and less swayable by extraneous influences whether in or out of the flesh, therefore we have our own say regarding our yield-

ing or not yielding to invitations and impulses, no matter whence such may proceed.

In the earlier stages of growth toward adepthood we are likely to appear self-opinionated and self-willed in a rather disagreeable way, because we are at a point on the road where we have to act from our own volition in place of being guided by others. The mistakes made by experimentists are not wilful sins, but blunders due to ignorance which can only be mastered by repeated efforts leading to eventual conquest. There is no other way of attainment than thru the gateway and along the path of successive efforts to achieve. The student must work out his own problems, often in solitary confinement in a scholastic cubicle, before he can reasonably hope to graduate with honors from his college, and in due time and turn become a professor in the very university from which he graduated, or in some similar seat of learning. The idle stupid question is always being raised, Why do not our spiritual guides and guardian angels (if we have any) protect us at all times from falling into error? The answer is simply that if they did thus completely shield us we should be rendered chronically subservient and actually automatic, therefore never able to reach to any such attainment ourselves as those more advanced entities have reached already. You can often be controlled, if you are willing to be, by very good influences who will pour helpful teachings thru your lips that will prove helpful to others; but when you set forth upon the road of self-initiation you have to assume far more individual responsibility, and for a time forego many delightful helps which assisted you along earlier portions of the spiritual incline. When adepthood has been attained, our relationship with the spirit-world is consciously far closer than ever previously, for then with open vision do we behold what formerly was only communicated to us by hearsay.

Whatever special exercises you may find profit-

able you have a right to pursue, but it is unwise, and sometimes dangerous, to endeavor to foist on others your own especial practices.

If every night before allowing sleep to overtake us we fix our thought steadily on some special goal of spiritual desire, during our sleeping period we shall be introduced to halls of learning and companioned by helpful preceptors who will greatly aid us on the forward path.

Whether we actively remember these experiences after we have awakened or not, will depend upon how gradually we have returned from the sleeping to the waking state and how far our outer brains are ready to receive psychical impressions, but no profitable experience in sleep ever fails to produce a beneficial result from which we profit knowingly or unknowingly during waking periods.

## LESSON XII.

### Objections, Answers and Observations on the Higher Uses of Mediumship

In its largest connotation, the familiar word Mediumship of necessity implies far more than when used in any ordinary restricted, or even in any restrictable sense. The actual fact of spirit-communion is here and there, now and again demonstrated thru the instrumentality of some highly sensitive man, woman or child, and intelligent investigators become convinced that there is, at least occasionally and in some limited degree, intercourse between two planes of existence frequently termed two worlds. But tho so small a measure of spiritual revelation is distinctly valuable and serves to suggest an all-including philosophy of human life and purpose far brighter and more rational than antiquated materialistic theories, the wider aspects of the mediumistic question are often entirely overlooked because of too intense concentration mentally upon matters of immediate interest to persons whose sole object, here and now, is to prove the single fact of life's individual continuity.

The fact is often commented upon adversely that a majority of alleged spirit-messages,—many of them undoubtedly genuine to the fullest extent possible in the limiting circumstances,—are trivial and throw very little light upon the life continuous, concerning which they undertake to deal.

So very unimportant, relatively speaking, is the subject-matter of probably 90 per cent of average mediumistic "messages" that we need not wonder or feel annoyed when we hear them classified as trivial in the extreme.

The triviality, however, does not render them worthless or uninteresting even from a scientific standpoint, but it does produce a feeling of discontent in the minds of seekers after more of truth than is conveyed in such limited communications. An obvious reason for such messages is that they an-

swer a constant demand more or less satisfactorily, and also that they emanate from individuals who have had no wide experience in spirit-life and who were commonplace men and women when they lived on earth. Professor Hyslop and other well-known investigators of prominence in the field of Psychological Research have wisely and fairly called attention to the fact that very often a seemingly trivial communication is possessed of higher evidential value than many a much loftier and far more philosophical utterance given thru the lips of some inspired orator, simply because the trivial message contained some individual quality characteristic of the personal source whence it was said to emanate.

Professor Hyslop in his published works on this fascinating subject shows reasonably and clearly how very commonplace are our daily conversations with our friends and the letters we usually write to our general acquaintances, even tho some of us may be men and women of considerable prominence in literary and scientific circles.

Thomas Huxley said at one time, when one of his scientific colleagues had called attention to spirit-communications which had satisfied Professor Alfred Russel Wallace and other eminent scientific celebrities, that he did not deny any of the assumed facts. Neither was he prepared to admit them, but granting their genuineness they were of no more interest to him than would be the conversation of a company of trivial young persons playing a game of crouquet on a country lawn were he able to hear it while sitting in some room in London.

From one standpoint we can understand Huxley's attitude easily enough, but it was long ago pointed out that it by no means expressed the truly scientific spirit, and it certainly made no allowance whatever for the enormous part played by personal affection in human life at all times everywhere. If those young people were unknown to the listener, and

their talk had no reference to any matter which concerned him sympathetically, we can comprehend and agree with his position entirely; but if those young persons were his sons and daughters, or other relatives or students in whom he took a fatherly interest, the case would be entirely different. Letters received from home, wherever home may be, are not usually valued as fine literary productions, but simply as epistles written by some person in whose lives we take much more than common interest. It is not the worth of the message so much as the kindly spirit of the writer that gives us joy when we receive the missive.

Having now justified in outline the interest usually taken in messages which lack high literary or scientific value, we ought to be ready to gaze much further afield and reckon with other and more nearly universal aspects of spirit-communion concerning which there is still dense popular ignorance. Once admit that spirit-communion is a fact in the economy of nature, and we cannot escape from the conclusion that it is an unacknowledged factor in all our lives to an extent impossible to define completely. Intercommunion and interdependence are two words which express the universal co-operative spirit. None of us can live to ourselves alone, not even if like Robinson Crusoe we should spend a year or more on a solitary island without even one human companion in the flesh. The better acquainted we become with telepathy, mental telepathy, and all else that concerns psychic intercourse between persons yet in the flesh without the intervention of ordinary physical means of converse, the clearer does it become that we can and do, both knowingly and unknowingly, when we are awake and when we are asleep, commune one with another in subtle ways unknown to any of our external senses. Ten-nyson's expression "spirit with spirit, ghost with ghost," truly voices this fact. This spiritual or ghostly intercourse between intimate friends, such as



to realize their existence on earth, seeing that every institution is brought into existence and kept alive psychically, rather than physically.

"He is a Jew who is one inwardly," is a text containing a tremendous wealth of food for thought. Many nominal Jews on earth have no love for Judaism, therefore in spirit-life they are not numbered among Israel's sons and daughter, while others who have no Hebrew ancestry and have not been brought up in the faith of Israel are spiritually members of the House of Israel, because of their vital sympathy with Jewish ideals.

No greater mistake can possibly be made than to suppose that external membership in any organization constitutes affiliation, or that lack of external membership excludes anyone from spiritual communion. In all churches and parties there are nominal members who have no spiritual affiliation with the institution to which they outwardly belong, and there is always a membership unseen by mortal eyes and unregistered in material books which goes to make up the soul or spirit of the federation. Nothing is easier than to force a good many people to join and outwardly support an institution of any kind on account of worldly advantages on one side and disadvantages on the other; but enforced outward membership is detrimental to the body which contains these unwillingly incorporated cells, the presence of which causes incessant friction and results in ultimate disruption. In the spirit-life all associations are far more nearly voluntary than on earth, by reason of the fact that ulterior motives cannot be appealed to anything like the same extent.

No one can ordain or disallow spirit-communion in reality, tho shortsighted dictators may issue peremptory edicts commanding their subjects to either join in exercises intended to induce spirit-communion or else to refrain entirely from all participation in such exercises.

The mental blindness of such dictators is pitiable

Alfred Tennyson and Arthur Hallam, may be more keenly intense when there is so very much spiritual affinity as exists undoubtedly between especially close friends, but there is a friendship and spiritual intimacy between companions or affinitizing souls which embraces entire communities or societies in spirit-life, and it is with one or another of these spheres, not exclusively with some particular individual, that we most frequently hold communion when our affections and thoughts are centered in matters of communal and sometimes of even world-wide interest.

Some particular "movement" or aspect of local reform may be the "hobby" of certain peculiar people whose outlook upon life in general is very much restricted and who cannot see much value in anything outside the narrow confines of their parochial club. Such persons are often highly conscientious and truly inspired by unseen helpers who engage with them in the limited philanthropy in which they take delight. On the unseen side there are far more workers than on the outwardly visible side of such a group of workers who live in their own especial fold, like sheep marked with an owner's name and carefully guarded by shepherd and dog lest they stray into other pastures. To persons who love limitations, and to whom narrow conventionalism affords placid pleasure, are attracted influences who, while in the flesh, lived in the same affectation and who have not yet outgrown it. Every "heaven" conceived of can have an actual temporary existence, and to the individuals now constituting it, it may appear a permanently satisfactory institution.

When a soul, passing out of the earthly tabernacle, insists upon receiving the ministrations of some particular society or church, we may feel assured that that soul is willingly, indeed wilfully, entering a certain clearly defined section of the spirit-world. It need be no more difficult to conceive of the existence of definite bodies or denominations in spirit-life than

in the extreme, for to the vision of a seer the means intended to promote an end in all such cases must invariably defeat it. That is why punishment is an egregious blunder and assists to promote the very crimes of misdemeanors it is intended to destroy. If you should forbid a child or a dependent from attending a meeting of any kind you could keep the physical body away but you could not prevent the mind from traveling, therefore you could not successfully forbid a particular kind of psychic influx of which you disapproved. You may lock up prisoners in jails, but you can only incarnate the flesh. You may execute a malefactor, but you cannot reform an individual by depriving one of his outer body. The whole blind punitive system, which is now breaking up the world over, is based in gross materialism and fostered by complete ignorance of the operation of law on the unseen planes of nature. Contemporaneously with the amazing demonstration of interest in all psychic questions which characterizes the present day, we find a world-wide determination to correct hoary abuses and completely reconstruct the penal system. The world at large is beginning to see how worse than futile are all endeavors to reconstruct character by punishment or to effect reform by repression. The less one talks about a subject the more one is apt to meditate thereon in silence, and it is through silent meditation or contemplation, far more than through noisy shouting that great results are brought to pass.

The only advantages accruing at any time from outward measures are to be traced finally to the status of mind they tend to induce and the special affections they incline to foster. Works of art which long endure have been born out of spiritual consciousness and stand externally as monuments to the great love and deep thought which originally inspired them.

The spiritual realm is a region of affectional conjunctions in which souls flew together in consequence

of some common affection and drift apart by reason of lack of interior congeniality. War and peace are the two great opposites, therefore, it would appear that no warrior could enter Heaven, which is a collective name for all orderly spheres; Hell being a collective name for all disorderly conditions.

It is true that no one can affiliate with heavenly influences in so far as he loves strife and wishes to intensify it, but when a warrior goes to war in the belief that it is his stern duty and that he is fighting in a righteous cause, he is by no means entirely cut off from the blessing of a celestial influx. Sherman's famous saying "War is Hell" was wrung from the intrepid soldier because he had seen the horrors of battle and felt his true humanity awakening within him. Such a man passing into spirit life becomes an arbitrator, a peace-maker; not one who eggs on nations to continued conflict. That there are warlike spirits fighting for their respective countries we know right well, and it is extremely easy to get in touch with them, for they are still in the earth's immediate atmosphere and present at recruiting stations and wherever else the war fever is encouraged. It is extremely probable that many of the limited patriotic influences are urging men and women to embark on a career of military "duty," while other more enlightened influences are persuading the same persons to take a higher and milder view of duty and work at peaceful industries for the true upbuilding of their native lands and for the ultimate benefit of the entire human race.

To merely claim that one is guided by unseen influences to perform certain definite deeds is not to rationally justify those deeds, because the unseen universe contains all sorts and conditions of humanity, and we can be genuinely inspired from an immense variety of sources. The vital crux of the entire situation is to be found solely in the motives which prompt us in our silent moments when we are most susceptible to spiritual influence.

Nothing can effectually separate us from what we truly love, therefore, no influences can ever come truly near us in the most intensely vital way unless we and they are united by the cords of deep mental affection. To merely profess interest in the world's welfare and verbally endorse well-sounding pacific phrases is not enough to protect us against the spirit of destructive militarism, but sincere love of humanity, whether outwardly expressed or not, must of necessity bind us closely in communion with the great army of philanthropists who are working diligently and incessantly to scatter finally the dark war clouds which have so long hung over the earth as a murky pall, and which are now being dispersed rapidly even thru the direful agency of active exterior belligerence.

Whenever a great crisis is reached there is a fierce clashing in the unseen spheres attaching to this planet; indeed, constituting its far larger portion. This is the "war in heaven" mentioned in the Apocalypse. (Vide Rev. xii, 7.)

In a period of such extreme sensitiveness as the present we are witnessing demonstrations of world-wide mediumship in far more than ordinary degree, and it is for us to definitely decide whether we will range ourselves or not on some definite side as conviction prompts us.

It is useless to condemn any one, but it is reasonable to throw all the light we can on the causes of manifest effects, for though the fixed relation between Cause and Effect remains utterly beyond our power to influence, we can take such practical advantage of this immutable order as to regulate our inner living so as to affiliate only with such types of influences as we wish to have for intimate companions.

Fear attracts, and so does hate. By fearing we attract the object of our dread, and by hating we attract the objects of our aversion.

If psychics, sensitives or mediums everywhere would but face this mighty problem definitely and



straightforwardly they would soon greatly lessen their present sufferings and immensely increase their happiness and usefulness. While it is important that everyone should awaken to this mighty truth concerning the universal operation of the immutable Law of Attraction, it is supremely important that the more sensitive among us should become aroused to the importance of rightly understanding it.

Mediumship can be made a great universal blessing and nothing but a blessing, while now it is partly a bane. The whole universe is at our service. We can tap it where we please directly we have become convinced of the limitless power of united love and thought, which, working in double harness, can truly accomplish all things.

What is known as Prophetic Mediumship figures largely in nearly all discussions concerning the part played by unseen spiritual influences in this planet's guidance. Can events be definitely foretold and, if so, how? is a question of universal and perennial interest, and one by no means easy to answer without acquaintanceship with many hidden causes which never meet the outward eye. The false view of prediction taken by a multitude of fatalistic thinkers, whose thought is never profound, is that to foretell an event accurately is to justify the doctrine that every occurrence on earth is foreordained and therefore pre-necessitated, in such a manner as to leave no room for the exercise of human freedom.

Our sense of freedom is often referred to as an illusion by these shallow would-be philosophers who are overlooking the most important of all the factors in the problem they imagine they have correctly solved. The immutability of law, coupled with the possibility of beholding with the eye of seership the workings of law on an interior plane or in a region veiled from exterior observation, are the two leading factors in the matter we are now considering. Granting these two essentials it becomes comparatively easy to account for predictions subsequently



fulfilled without tolerating any fatalistic view of human destiny.

"Coming events cast their shadows before them," is an oft quoted and truthful saying, but one that seldom receives the thoughtful attention it richly deserves. A coming event must be on some road traveling from one place or plane to another, and as it journeys its casts a shadow in advance which an unusually sensitive individual can perceive, but this "shadow" is not detectable by persons who lack sufficient sensitiveness to detect it.

The fact that a letter has been already posted and is on the way to a person to whom it is addressed, and the further fact that the postman will deliver it at a certain time at a certain door may be clairvoyantly apprehended. A statement may be made much as follows: "You will receive a letter three weeks from today, postmarked Sydney." The person addressed may reply, "I know no one in Australia." That makes no difference to the clairvoyant who still persists that she sees the letter coming to that person at that time, and at the expiration of three intervening weeks the predicted missive is in your hands. An international conflict is an immensely greater event to foretell than the arrival of an unexpected private letter; but the law governing both predictions is exactly the same, as in both instances the prophecy is based upon more than ordinary information in possession of the prophet. A prophet who simply announces the advent of an unexpected event of world-wide moment has not of necessity any more responsibility for its coming than has the predictor of the letter's arrival at your house any responsibility for what it contains or for the previous act of the writer who indited it.

When causes are already in motion and things are traveling outward from unseen places as seeds sprout in the ground, there is no fatalism in definitely predicting the appearance of a certain crop at the end of a determinable germinative period. There is

a time when we are free to act or free to refrain from action, but once having acted in a definite manner we are not free to escape the consequence of the completed deed. It may be further declared that precisely as the actions of men and women on earth lead to certain inevitable consequences through the unalterable working of the law of cause and effect, so do the actions of spiritual entities disrobed of gross material forms produce results in planetary government. The balance of power is always in the hands of the most highly intelligent. Knowledge gives power, while ignorance must ever be the concomitant of weakness. The book of Daniel contains the expressive statement, "that ye may know that the heavens do rule," a very favorite proof text with astrologers. What is exactly meant by "the heavens" is an open question with many commentators, for while all may agree that reference is made to some celestial states superior to all things terrestrial, the mode of action of these "heavens" is not always fully decipherable.

If heavens are taken collectively to signify interior states, and earth stands for exterior conditions, the meaning of the passage quoted is sufficiently clear, and it is reasonable to assume that a correct view of heavenly operations must include the action of incarnate and excarnate humanity. The handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast has often been cited as one of the most amazing combinations of physical with prophetic mediumship on record, and it reads as though the time had then come in Babylon when it was too late to save an empire which had grown so corrupt as to be at the very point of necessary overthrow.

The chief value of a prophetic utterance at so dreadful a time would be to give some opportunity for escape for those who would heed the warning, otherwise a bald prediction would be useful only as illustrating the inevitable doom of iniquity, and in that case it would be capable of conveying a valu-

able moral lesson. To simply predict impending doom is mere fortune telling, which does not deserve to rank with enlightened and enlightening prophecy. One of Shakespeare's characters has truly said "There is a tide in the affairs of men that, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." The truly useful inspired and inspiring prophet is one who can declare when that tide will come in and who assists those who hearken to words of prophecy to take advantage of the flood. To sow in watered earth is to act wisely, and it is to prepare for a rich harvest of bread in days to come. While to sow at the wrong time for sowing is to court disappointment, unwittingly or carelessly. It is not rational to believe that the affairs of earth are either arbitrarily dictated by unseen influences or that the earth is left without spiritual promptings and guidance. The simplest definitions are often the most correct interpretations. Teachers stand over scholars to aid them in their studies, but at no experimental stations, and in no laboratory where apprentices are acquiring ability through experimentation of their own to become experts, can learned professors absolutely control the movements of the students in such wise as to make the student entirely reliant on the wisdom and forethought of their preceptor. We should always remember that this earth is a seminary, a place of education; neither a place of reward or punishment. The school idea is one that appeals to all thoughtful minds. We are not automatic agents of unseen intelligences, but pupils under the direction of teachers and given an ever-increasing amount of latitude for self-directing action as we proceed from class to class and advance from the rank of juniors to that of seniors in this terrestrial academy. Mediumship, in the last analysis, is simply susceptibility to information obtained psychically in one or another of many possible ways, ranging from original infantile susceptibility to extraneous guidance to mature deliberative exercise of inherent faculties employable or not at the discretion of their owners.

As all things work together for eventual good to all, we may rest assured that the higher intelligences are always immeasurably stronger than the lower, and that righteousness will ultimately conquer all inquiry.

But true optimism does not blindly chirp out the childish words "God's in his heaven; all's right with the world," which Robert Browning put into the mouth of an inexperienced girl going out at 7 o'clock on an April holiday morning. It is to **Abt Vogler** rather than to the song from **Pippa Passes** that we must look to find Browning's genuine and incontrovertible optimism; for it is not the untried and untempted who can truly sing the triumphant song of faith vindicated and hope transformed to blissful realization, but those who have born the burden of trial and, having seen their early illusions vanish, have supplanted those roseate dreams of childhood with certainties derived from actual experience of how all roads that wind and turn eventually lead into abiding light.

We need a revelation through enlightened mediumship far transcending the borderline experiences now so common, and as we learn the lesser lessons which those smaller revelations teach, we become prepared for fuller unveilings of the boundless spiritual universe of which this planet though a minute is by no means an unimportant section.

Come up higher is ever the counsel of exalted spiritual intelligences, and from the sublime altitudes of celestial blessedness we derive encouragement to press forward even as those have already pressed on who are now our chief enlighteners. A true spiritual philosophy is exquisitely simple and at the same time immeasurably profound. Every question asked by the human mind is progressively answerable, but we must advance step by step, line upon line, and digest precept after precept in logical consecutive sequential order. There are no limits to attainable knowledge and none to our possible indi-

vidual achievements. To set a justifiable limit to spiritual revelation is unthinkable. We must either deny it altogether or allow that it is boundless. Finally considered, there are no real inconsistencies in any statements made by communicating entities, because none can describe things other than as they view them. To those who declare that we are arbitrarily fated, so it appears; but this is in consequence of lack of consciousness of innate ability to transcend environment on the part of the fatalistic babblers. In an undeveloped state of consciousness we are indeed subject to the sway of our surroundings, for we are the foolish ones who are ruled by their stars according to the old astrological adage; but as we advance in self-knowledge we become rulers where we formerly were slaves. We may hear of spirits mourning over the troubles of those left behind on earth to battle fiercely with a hard, cold world, and we may also hear of encouragement and cheer given to mourners by friends who have passed to upper spheres. All these declarations coincide with certain facts in human experience, but experiences on both sides of the "veil" are so immensely varied that we must strive to take into account the exact source whence a statement is received before deciding as to its value for our guidance.

### **Nothing Can Ever Be Too Good To Be True**

It is always wise to apply practically the pragmatic or utilitarian test to all revelations. We must try all teachings by the effect they can produce if we accept them. Common sense alone suffices to convince the open-minded that pessimism and fatalism are incapable of aiding human progress or contributing in any measure to health, success or happiness. Let us not waste energy and depress our mentality by indulging in the entertainment of theories or in coqueting with doctrines which prove themselves inaccurate by the sad effects they produce wherever they are welcomed and adhered to.



Suicide is justified by hopelessness. Progress is accomplished by holding on through light and darkness to the magnificent assurance that truth must eventually conquer all error, and virtue triumph over every shape of vice. In the exercise of mediumship we should resolve uncompromisingly to yield to such influences from unseen planes as render us aid by helping us to live more nobly ourselves and at the same time assist our neighbors to rise superior to whatever tends to hold them down. World-development means the unification eventually of all nations and interests in one glorious co-operative federation. The old monopolistic, tyrannical, oppressive and repressive systems of government and administration have been weighed in the balances of reason and equity and found so completely wanting that they are doomed to quick extinction, and the whole earth will rejoice when purer governments and juster laws have succeeded to those dying relics of a less enlightened past.

Spiritual hosts of light are ushering in the world's glad, bright, new day, and it is for all who love justice and seek to array themselves on the side of progress to open wide their hearts and minds to such influences, and to such only, as seek and tend to promote the incoming of the long predicted day of international federation. May the Divine Will be done on earth, in us and thru us, even as it is already done in the Celestial Heaven, is the earnest faithful, workful prayer of all who align themselves uncompromisingly on the side of the hosts of light who are the true directors of our growing planet's heavenward progress.



## BITTER QUIZ.

### QUESTIONS ON TWELVE LESSONS ON MEDIUMSHIP.

This is not a lesson in the sense that the preceding twelve lessons are such, nor is it in any sense a review of those lessons. The questions asked are to be answered by the student after he has gained a general outline idea of the contents of the lessons and feels desirous of testing his understanding of what they contain. It is not profitable in any high degree, except as a simple memory-exercise, to refer to the exact words of any lesson and repeat these precise quotations as answers to these questions, for in that case the student would display no ability to couch familiar ideas in language of his own, nor would he show that he had any individual understanding of the views he was expressing in some one else's phraseology. In order that every person who studies this Course of Lessons may become familiar enough with the views expressed therein to be able to easily undergo a cross-examination at random, no attempt has been made to arrange the following questions in any consecutive order. On the contrary, the questions are asked abruptly for the purpose of giving students an opportunity to test their own familiarity with the general scope of the teaching they have studied. No question is asked in the entire 100 which is not answered clearly in one or other of the twelve lessons.

Entirely apart from any special value which the lessons may or may not possess as explanatory essays, this quiz will be found extremely helpful to all who take advantage of it, because it affords an excellent opportunity for cultivating the good mental habit of grasping and holding ideas in substance altogether apart from memorizing the exact word-

ing of a speech book. It is recommended that the student write out his own answers in his own words and subsequently compare these answers with the working of the lessons to see how far he has intelligently digested what they contain and advocate.

As the lessons are by no means finally exhaustive many a student may, through employment of this Quiz, make many valuable additions to them and produce a set of lessons of his own far superior to these, which are not sent forth as authoritative dicta, but only as helps to seekers after useful knowledge concerning the great question of MEDIUMSHIP, a term which can properly cover a far wider field than any that has yet been satisfactorily traversed.

The author of this Course of Instruction particularly desires to emphasize the fact that the object of its production is mainly to assist students to think for themselves and thereby further the development of their own individuality, so that when approaching the intricate Psychic Problem which so many earnest truthseekers are now resolutely tackling, they may not yield ready submission to any attempted explanations they may chance to hear, neither be frightened off the field of investigation by scarecrow utterances concerning "danger", but set themselves calmly, honestly and fearlessly to work to the extent of their ability to obey the wise injunction "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," an injunction impossible to follow unless one is free to investigate all subjects impartially and in the midst of all surroundings maintain a placid mind.

W. J. COLVILLE.

## 100 QUESTIONS ON 12 LESSONS ON MEDIUMSHIP

Asked by the Author.

1. What do you understand by simple Mediumship?
2. What may rightly be termed special Mediumship?
3. Does Mediumship necessitate the subjugation of one mind to another?
4. What is meant by spontaneous Mediumship?
5. Is there any logical connection between Inspiration and Control?
6. What do you understand by Clairvoyance?
7. How would you define Clairaudience?
8. What definition can you give of Clairsentience?
9. How do you define Psychometry; whence is the term derived?
10. What do you understand by Prophecy?
11. What sort of person is a Prophet or Prophetess?
12. Is prophesying equivalent to fortunetelling?
13. What do you think about Healing Mediumship?
14. Does Mediumship interfere with rightful self-assertion?
15. Is there any connection between Mediumship and Hypnotism?
16. What attitude is it right and reasonable to take toward unseen entities?
17. Do you consider all mediumistic experiences proofs of Spirit-communion?
18. What ideas have you of Sub-consciousness or the Subjective Mind?
19. Can you differentiate Super-consciousness from Sub-consciousness?
20. Where do you think the Spirit-World is situated?
21. Is all communion with the Spirit-World conscious and intelligent?
22. What do you think primarily determines our relation with the Unseen?
23. What is your concept of the Law of Attraction?
24. What part should our Will play in regulating our Mediumship?
25. What is the effect of Thought upon Mediumship?
26. Give a clear definition of Will and Thought as distinct actors?
27. Can you determine what you will attract to you psychically?
28. Can you derive information from spiritual sources while asleep?
29. What and Where is the Astral Plane?
30. Have you any clear idea of spiritual relationships?
31. Do we necessarily associate spiritually with earthly companions?
32. What do you think chiefly determines spiritual affinity?

33. Define consociation as distinct from association?
34. Is Mediumistic likely to follow the bent of natural inclinations?
35. Can mediumistic abilities be wisely cultivated; if so, how?
36. Has bodily health any effect on mediumship?
37. Has mental health any influence on mediumship?
38. Has moral character any effect on mediumship?
39. What is necessary to constitute a person a Physical Medium?
40. What temperament is essential for Mental Mediumship?
41. Has food any influence on mediumship?
42. Has wearing apparel any effect on mediumship?
43. Have colors any effect on mediumship?
44. Has music any influence on mediumship?
45. Have Works of Art any effect on mediumship?
46. Is Poetry akin to Mediumship?
47. Has climate any effect on mediumship?
48. Is an outdoor life conducive to mediumistic development of any sort?
49. Have Developing Circles any useful end to serve?
50. If Developing Circles are formed, how should they be conducted?
51. What attitude should a mediumistic person take toward surroundings?
52. What is your idea of Telepathy or Mental Telegraphy?
53. Does mediumship include telepathic experiences?
54. Can we be influenced by our friends unknowingly; if so, how?
55. Can we be influenced against our determined Will?
56. What are the safeguards of mediumship?
57. How should we judge the value of communications?
58. What is the best time for psychic development?
59. What are the best places for psychic development?
60. Are we often influenced spiritually while we are sleeping?
61. Can we learn to regulate our Dreams?
62. Can you discriminate between a psychic vision and a memory-picture?
63. Give some clear idea of Psychic Revelation as distinct from Memory.
64. What mental attitude is most favorable when consulting a medium?
65. Are there dangers connected with mediumship?
66. If there are dangers, how can we best avoid them?
67. Have you any thought about Obsession?
68. Is it ever necessary to yield to unpleasant influences?
69. How would you get rid of psychic annoyances?
70. If you are a medium and also a mental healer, how do you function?

71. Have you any clear thoughts on Inspirational Speaking?
72. What is your idea of Automatic Writing?
73. Have you any theory accounting for Spirit-Materialization?
74. Have you any definite idea of Human Atmosphere or Aura?
75. How do we generate our auric belts and how do they protect us?
76. How should mediumistic children be dealt with?
77. Do mediums attract the spirit friends of those who apply to them?
78. What is the relative power of enlightened and unenlightened spirits?
79. Can you explain Hauntings and other uncanny phenomena?
80. Is mediumship of any practical value in a life-career?
81. Should we seek to repress mediumship?
82. Can we rightfully employ mediumship in business?
83. Is it ever lawful to use mediumship as a detective force?
84. What are the consequences of seeking spirit-communication to harm others?
85. Need we ever be afraid of unseen influences if we desire righteousness?
86. Has mediumship any connection with Insanity, when it is abnormal?
87. How would you set to work to regulate disorderly mediumship?
88. Can a medium be a highly individualized man or woman?
89. Are mediumistic experiences consistent with Self reliance?
90. Have religious ceremonies any effect on mediumship?
91. Is Yoga practice helpful in regulating mediumship?
92. Is mediumship universal or particular, or is it both?
93. Has mediumship any part to play in international affairs?
94. Can mediumship be proved of service in abolishing warfare?
95. Has education any influence on mediumship?
96. Can there be successful training grounds for mediums?
97. Is mediumship subject-to law, or is it purely erratic?
98. How can we control sensitiveness if we have suffered from it?
99. Give some sound practical advice to mediums who are unsuccessful.
100. Sum up the philosophy of the 12 Lessons.

# REASON

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